

# The CANADIAN FORUM

*An Independent Journal of Opinion and the Arts*

## The Old Fiscal Orthodoxy

► THERE IS EVERY indication that the budgetary policies of Mr. Harris, the Minister of Finance, are not much different from those of Mr. George Humphrey in the United States. The latter's views are well known; they consist of a single-minded devotion to the concept of a balanced budget irrespective of the needs of the domestic economy, the state of the national defences, and the carrying out of an effective foreign policy. In Ottawa, the same fiscal anachronism seems to prevail, despite all that has been learned since the precepts of orthodox finance held sway in the 'twenties, and despite the articulation of a very different policy by this same Government in 1945.

Every action of the new Minister of Finance indicates a determination to extend the series of budget surpluses which his predecessor achieved under somewhat different circumstances. Whether Mr. Harris' actions are the end product of intellectual rigidity, or of a frivolous desire to complete his first year with the books in balance, or of complacency with the conservative views of some senior cabinet colleagues, does not much matter. It may even be, of course, that the government has not reverted to the old fiscal orthodoxy at all, but has merely been misled by its own optimistic utterances. But what matters is the end result, and the result so far has been a failure to respond to the necessities of the current economic situation, which is one of declining national income and very restricted employment opportunities for the growing labor force.

A good example of the Government's outlook is the recent cutback in aircraft production, which occasioned the sudden dismissal of one thousand workers at Avro in Toronto. This "stretch-out" of the defence program is over and above the reduction in the rate of defence spending by \$200 million which has already occurred. Whether or not the spreading of jet-aircraft production over more years is desirable or not is difficult for the layman to judge, especially since there has been no public discussion whatsoever of the objectives of defence policy in the near future. What is clear, however, is the pitifully small amount of increased public spending to replace the decline in the defence budget. The Government has already passed a bill to spend another \$10 millions in 1955 on unemployment benefits. It proposes to increase the Colombo Plan allotment by \$1 million, a feeble token of our concern for the welfare of the Asiatic peoples. There

are to be some new public works projects which will cost \$100 millions over a period of several years. Altogether the whole program of new expenditures announced in the Speech from the Throne does not add up to more than a fraction of the decline in defence spending. Furthermore, recent press reports state that Mr. Harris has ordered a severe pruning of expenditures in all departments, wherever possible. The atmosphere in Ottawa seems to be one of rigorous belt-tightening, a policy more appropriate to inflationary conditions.

The fact is that the Government refuses to face up to the realities of the moment. A superb example of this obtuseness is Mr. Gardiner's declaration in the House that farm income would have been the largest on record if the wheat crop had not been exceptionally poor. In other words, "if wishes were horses, beggars would ride." Another instance of ministerial opacity was Mr. Abbott's assumption, in his April budget, that the gross national income in 1954 would reach or surpass the 1953 level. At that time, *The Forum* questioned the justification for basing fiscal policy on such an improbability. It has subsequently been urged on this page that taxes be cut all round, with particular emphasis on personal income taxes. Nothing has since happened which would require a change in this view. Yet the Government continues to behave as if Mr. Abbott's optimism has been borne out.

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## Current Comment

### Revision of the Charter

► IN 1945 THE CANADIAN DELEGATION to the San Francisco Conference proposed that the tenth session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1955 should place on its agenda the proposal to call a conference to review the United Nations Charter, should no such conference have been held by that time. The Canadian proposal was incorporated into the Charter and will materially affect the proceedings of this year's session of the General Assembly.

Among the many suggestions which have been made to strengthen the United Nations three at least deserve special attention. The first of these, which is most frequently heard in the United States, concerns the veto power enjoyed by the great powers in the Security Council. It has been proposed that the principle of unanimity be abolished or at least modified so as to place a variety of matters beyond the reach of the veto. Secondly, the procedure for admitting new members is considered to be outmoded; a new formula governing the admission of states at present excluded might enable the nineteen candidates for membership to join, thus bringing the world organization closer to being just that without repeating the tragi-comic performance of the Security Council in its past debates on the admission of specific new members. It has been suggested thirdly that the present voting procedure in the Assembly, which is on the "one member, one vote" principle, be abandoned in favor of a weighted voting based on the capacity and willingness of members to assume military and economic responsibilities.

While these suggested revisions of the Charter are no doubt fascinating to international and constitutional lawyers, excessive preoccupation with them is likely to lead to an unrealistic approach to the problems of the U.N. Most suggestions for revision really stem from a mistaken view of the functions and the nature of the organization.

The desire for the above reforms emanates from the belief that the United Nations is a weapon in the cold war, rather than an agency whose main purpose is to promote international understanding. To abolish or weaken the veto, to admit members on the basis of a straight vote in the assembly (where anti-Communist states command a majority), to change the voting system on the basis of military and economic contributions to the U.N.—to implement any of these changes would clearly make the United Nations a one-sided forum for an anti-Communist alliance. At best it would simply aggravate the cold war, at worst it would drive the Communist and possibly the neutralist countries out of the United Nations altogether. And while the world organization has not been successful in its task of reducing international tension it is now, and may become even more effectively in the future, a useful agency where delegates from many states can meet to discuss common problems.

In any case, suggested amendments which are unacceptable to the Soviet Union could never be adopted by the United Nations. The conference at which Charter revision is to be discussed can be convened by a two-thirds majority of members of the General Assembly, but the amendments adopted by such a conference must be ratified by a two-thirds majority of all the members, including the five permanent members of the Security Council: that is, including the Soviet Union. To propose seriously any of the changes mentioned earlier could not, therefore, have any fruitful results and would inevitably increase the already dangerous tension

between the Communist and most of the anti-Communist states.

There is yet another reason why too great an emphasis on Charter reform has its dangers: it tends to divert attention from the real problem of the United Nations. Surely the basic weakness of the organization is not its machinery, but the way in which the existing machinery is being used by the members. The mechanics of constitutions are usually relatively unimportant; in most cases the basic document can be changed through informal processes without resorting to formal amendment. The Uniting for Peace resolution of the General Assembly, for example, enables the latter organ to act even in matters of security when the Security Council is immobilized by the use of the veto. There is no provision for this in the Charter.

The United Nations, if it ever becomes an effective force in the cause of peace, will do so not because of an improved Charter, but because of a change in attitude among the great powers. What is needed is not better machinery but greater tolerance and flexibility and less concern with national pride and the crusading spirit.

Canada is in an excellent position to work toward a more constructive attitude in this matter. The smaller states, particularly those whose public opinion is little given to violent reactions toward world events, are in a better position than the giants to bring about a reasonable attitude to international problems. While a constant and thoughtful concern with the revision of the Charter may be useful, the really



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important task facing the free world now is the bringing about of a rational and tolerant attitude among the members of the United Nations. It is here that both the Canadian public and the Canadian government have an important contribution to make.

## L. A. C. Panton

L. A. C. Panton's earlier training was as an engineer and he was particularly interested in mechanical drafting. After the first world war he trained in a commercial art studio, then became a teacher of art in Toronto schools, first in Central then Western Technical School, then in Northern Vocational School. He was principal of the Ontario College of Art at the time of his sudden death. In his busy life as a teacher he was able to make some excursions away, to Europe in the summer, to the United States on a sabbatical leave. In his teaching he was painstaking and thorough, he wanted his students to have minds reaching for new ideas all the time; he felt they should be well-rounded human beings and not just crammed with a series of quick-selling art techniques. As one good friend of his says, a great many of the best commercial artists in town now running large studios, are old Panton graduates, as are many of the prize winners in the art directors' shows. At the Memorial Exhibition at the Art Gallery of Toronto I ran into two students of his of twenty-odd years ago who told me: "Of all our teachers he was the one of whom we felt a real sense of personal loss."

Of course when he came to direct the Ontario College of Art there was a certain amount of heat generated over his ideas of discipline and procedure, particularly among students who felt that to be an artist you had to look like Montparnasse or an imitation of it. Mr. Panton himself had a personal peccadillo in this matter, and he always dressed as if for the office, even on sketching trips, when strangers would see a tall man wearing a business suit and a white shirt and a tie and a hat, maybe a mackinaw, busily working at a picture. He told the story on himself of how he called one of the more bohemian students into his office one day, for he thought he ought to speak to him; he told him that slovenly dressed led to slovenly work, that he should spruce up; most of the successful painters dress like bankers. "Yes," said the young man, "and they paint like bankers too."

At his death he was president of the Arts and Letters Club, he had been vice-president of the Royal Canadian Academy, he was a past-president of the Ontario Society of Artists. He had worked on a constitution for the Ontario branch of the Federation of Canadian Artists in the war years—wherever work of this kind was needed he was willing to give a great deal of time and thought to help.

As a result, he was not a prolific painter. Some of his latest sketches are lyrical and calm with lovely color. Indeed, he always let himself go a bit more in sketches. But his finished canvases are few, for, as he himself said, he worked slowly. This must have been because he was so meticulous and conscientious in his work and because of all the other demands made upon his time. The Memorial Exhibition at the Art Gallery of Toronto gives an idea of his painting in different periods. His color was always restrained, sombre, sometimes grim. His interest in the shape of the visual world, the contours of hill, the form of tree and cloud were moulded into designs in which texture is smooth, almost metallic. Then he began going to Nova Scotia, where the play of elemental forces could be seen on the barren rocks, the stormy water. In the later pictures he has painted the tensions of air and wind in complicated and swirling rhythms, eddies of wind and air and mist; the currents of water and solidified struggles of molten and ancient rock build up an

almost abstract expression whose tension mounts as you follow the ramifications of the design. These are not simple pictures: they are the sophisticated and complexly organized pictures of a thoughtful and austere man who in both his life and his art kept more in reserve than he exhibited.

HELEN FRYE.

## Life Insurance and the CBC

▶ A RECENT HALF-HOUR CBC broadcast over a Dominion network well exemplifies the value of nationally operated radio and television as distinct from commercially sponsored programs, for in it business practices were investigated and facts and logical inferences offered for the benefit of the public.

The program was part 3 in "The Search for Security" series, and it was devoted to the consideration and comparison of high-cost and protection life insurance, the choices and what they involve. The producer was Gordon Babineau and the writers Jack Brown and Michael Sheldon; and the three players in Cross Section, as it was called, were Frank Peddie as chairman, Larry McAnce as an economist, and Robert Christie as a social worker. The subject under discussion, the life insurance business, had been given a somewhat frank treatment the week before, so that the topic was to some extent continued.

The content of the script, which ran to twenty-one pages, was the need for *protection* or *renewable term* insurance in preference to straight life, 20-pay life, and endowment types, all of which are widely pressed upon the public by the companies, and at costs from twice to ten or fifteen times as great. It was emphasized that in an effort to protect his dependents, the purchaser owed a duty to himself to shop around for the lowest price available.

During the discussion there was detailed mention of the reasons for company pressure to purchase high-cost insurance—the desire to obtain huge funds for investment, costly buildings, high profits, commissions, shareholders' dividends, and salaries. The results, too, were dealt with, notably the "lapse scandal"—the termination of anywhere from 2½ to 16 per cent of the business, with great losses in policyholders' protection and equity.

Many people, it was stated during the discussion, were *insurance poor*, the results of overloading being at least as bad as those from the lack of any protection. And it was pointed out that millions of policies must be surrendered without any return in the first two or three years in order to bring the average life of *all* policies to seven years. It was stated that over-zealous salesmen, pressured by executives above them, give the whole industry a black eye.

It was stressed, too, that the buyer of high-cost policies, with protection and savings in one account, did not even receive the protection for which he paid so highly; for if he died before the maturity of his contract his savings—perhaps amounting to \$3,000 or more on a \$10,000 policy—were used as 30 per cent of the amount paid to his widow, the company paying only \$7,000. For this, among many other reasons, the purchase of *pure* or *protection* insurance was advocated in place of the higher-cost types, and Government Annuities recommended for such savings as the insurer found it possible to make for the purpose of supplementing retiring allowances.

Taken altogether the broadcast is an excellent example of what may be done to educate the public in financial matters.

EDWIN C. GUILLET.

## Canadian Calendar

- Premier Bennett of British Columbia announced at Vancouver on Dec. 13 that an agreement had been signed for construction of a natural gas pipeline from the Peace River area through British Columbia to the U.S. border.
- The Department of External Affairs announced on Dec. 13 that Parliament at the coming session would be asked to vote \$26,400,000 for Colombo Plan purposes, \$1,000,000 more than the annual appropriation for the last few years.
- The Bureau of Statistics forecast on Dec. 15 that, on account of the smaller grain crop harvested in Western Canada, the gross national product for 1954 will be about 2 per cent less than last year (the first annual decline since the last war).
- The Dominion Brewers' Association reported on Dec. 16 that per capita consumption of beer in 1953 climbed to 13.8 gallons compared to 5.8 in 1939.
- The Bureau of Statistics reported on Dec. 20 that 225 of the 645 awards open to Canadians for post-graduate study are offered in the United States, Canada followed with 171 and the United Kingdom with 165.
- Dividend payments by Canadian companies for 1954 reached the record level of \$570,228,654.
- The federal government is investigating the feasibility of a scheme to switch the peak-season flow of the Columbia River through a huge tunnel into the basin of the Fraser River, and thus develop more than double the power to come from the Cornwall section of the St. Lawrence Seaway.
- The Labor Department announced on Dec. 22 that there were 298,600 men and women trying to get jobs through the National Employment Service during the third week of November.
- A construction record was marked up in the Toronto area during 1954, on the basis of figures supplied by MacLean Building Reports. The grand total for 11 months was \$359,189,200, as compared with \$259,702,900 the previous year.
- Premier Campbell of Manitoba announced late in October that the redistribution of provincial electoral seats would be handled in future by an independent commission.
- Shareholders of the Dominion Bank and of the Bank of Toronto have approved the amalgamation of the two banks.
- It is announced from Vancouver that Imperial Oil Ltd. will spend \$9,000,000 on exploration of some 2,500,000 acres of reservation lands in north-eastern British Columbia.
- Production figures for the first 11 months of 1954 indicate that Canadian woodpulp output will set new records in 1954 and will exceed by close to 400,000 tons the record set in 1951, according to Canadian Pulp and Paper Association.
- Exports in November reached the highest monthly total of the year and imports the second highest, with both also showing gains over November of 1953, the Bureau of Statistics said on Dec. 27.
- Canada in 1954 experienced the most favorable health conditions on record, according to statistics issued by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. on Dec. 27. They calculate the death-rate for the year at 8.2 per 1000 population, the third year in which the death-rate has been lower than 9 per 1000.
- The Bureau of Statistics reported on Dec. 27 that Canadians sold \$83,900,000 worth of securities abroad during October, while buying \$76,300,000—the highest turnover (\$160,000,000) in three years.
- Establishment of a Canadian College of Teachers for stimulus and recognition of professional competence is being considered by the Canadian Teachers Federation. It would set examinations and require qualifications of a high standard.
- Of the 4000 Japanese moved from British Columbia to Alberta during the war, 2500 have settled down as permanent residents of that province, and are employed as teachers, doctors, secretaries, etc. Some own land of their own.
- A discovery of exceptionally rich copper ore in Temagami Island in Lake Temagami has been made by Geo-Scientific Prospectors Ltd. The discovery ranks among the highest grade mineral deposits ever found in Canada.
- More mortgage foreclosures and money recovery writs were issued in 1954 for the County of York in Ontario than ever before, even during the bleak years of the depression.
- The Ontario Hydro-Electric Power Commission is building a 1550-foot steel and concrete structure into the Niagara River above the Falls in order (1) to halt the erosion on the face of the Horseshoe Falls and (2) to control the waters for more effective hydro-electric use.
- The Bureau of Statistics estimates that mineral production in Canada, tripling in the last decade, jumped in 1954 by \$118,000,000 over the 1953 yield.
- The Government has decided to cut next year's budget of the CBC International Service by roughly \$500,000. It will mean curtailments in broadcasts to Europe and possibly to Latin America and Australia.
- Business of Canada's construction industry in 1954 increased 6 per cent over the year before and came within striking distance of matching the record level established in 1951. Total value of construction amounted to \$2,154,959,200 as compared with \$2,017,060,700 for 1953.
- Lower food prices snipped a fifth of a point from the consumer price-index during November. The index eased from 116.8 to 116.6. It was the first decline in living costs in three months.
- Canadian farm income for 1954 has shown the first substantial drop from the all-time high level reached in 1951 and 1952, \$2,400 millions, 12.5 per cent below last year and 15 per cent below the \$2,800 million peak in 1951 and 1952. Main cause is the sluggish export movement in wheat.
- In the Speech from the Throne on Jan. 7 the Government forecast a drive to help the economic situation by providing more work generally and improving the benefits payable to the jobless.
- A severe sales drop—amounting to 38 per cent—contributed to a net consolidated loss of \$1,919,765 for Cockshutt Farm Equipment in the year ended Oct. 31. This decline is attributed mainly to the Canadian market, where poor crop conditions and a continued decline in farm purchasing power prevailed.

• The Immigration Department reported on Jan. 11 that immigration into Canada during November 1954 was 38 per cent below November 1953. Over the eleven months January-November the decline was 7 per cent.

• On Jan. 11 the Commons gave first reading to a bill to increase and liberalize the supplementary unemployment benefits payable in the winter months.

• The most significant features of the Quebec Government estimates for the fiscal year 1955-56 is the increased expenditure for health and education.

• Unemployment is up in most major centres across Canada, compared with the situation at this period of 1953.

• Oil companies operating in Saskatchewan and Manitoba shattered all production records in the first nine months of 1954.

• Canada's exports increased in November, but the overall total for the first eleven months of 1954 declined by \$270,200,000.

• More than forty delegates from ten civic orchestras in Ontario met on Jan. 14 in St. Catharines to discuss formation of a federation of orchestras.

• MacMillan & Bloedel Ltd. announced that two new pulp and paper mills will be constructed at Port Alberni, B.C., under a \$30,000,000 expansion program.

• The Wilkie, Sask., Press has won the Canadian Weekly Editor Trophy for excellence in editorial writing, it was announced from Vancouver on Jan. 10.

## Lessons from the Ford Strike

W. G. Phillips

▶ RECENT MONTHS SAW a regrettable episode written into the annals of labor-management relations in Canada, in the drawn-out and extremely costly strike at Ford of Canada. This strike could hardly have been timed to inflict greater financial hardship on the workers nor to exert more serious effects on the company's market position. Yet, despite its tremendous cost to both sides, the strike dragged on through months of deadlock, pinpointed only by a few well-meaning but fruitless efforts of third parties to bring the disputants together. Why did the strike last so long while both sides suffered so much?

The final settlement of the Ford strike should not, of course, be made an occasion for blame-placing and recrimination. The job now is to bury old animosities and to start working afresh toward a lasting peaceful relationship. Nevertheless, gratification over the strike's end should not obscure the constructive lessons which it may hold for future labor-management relations in this country. A few such lessons may be found in the length of the dispute itself.

The leading issues over which the strike began last October were twofold, involving the union's monetary demands and its demands for changes in the seniority procedures. Other issues there were, but to all appearances at least, these two were the crucial ones. Monetarily, the union demanded a 4c per hour wage increase across-the-board, plus "fringe" benefits in the form of medical and hospital insurance, life



"TELEVISION WILL BRING THE REALITY OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS INTO THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF EVERY CANADIAN."

insurance for pensioners, and a seventh paid statutory holiday. The company, while refusing these demands, did offer certain fringe benefits, including three weeks' paid vacation for 15-year-service employees, an increase of call-in pay from 3 to 4 hours, increased hospital allowance and the inclusion of the 8c per hour cost of living allowance in the base pay.

The other major issue—seniority—is too involved to be treated at length here. Seniority has always been a contentious issue in the automobile industry because temporary layoffs have been frequent and, to date at least, unavoidable in this industry. As the strike date approached the Company withdrew its demand for changes in the seniority clause, expressing willingness to leave the existing arrangements intact. The union held out for certain changes designed to reduce a practice which it claimed was becoming too common in the company, that of basing eligibility for layoff on the particular job which an employee was doing rather than on his length of service.

On these issues, the views of the two sides were exact opposites. The company held that the costs of granting the union's demands, including the necessary price increases, would jeopardize its competitive position in an already-tightening market, with possibly disastrous long-run results for both the company and its employees. The union, on its side, pointed to the company's earnings record and maintained the company could "afford to pay the entire amount of the union's demands out of profits, without affecting its competitive position in any way, and still retain a very satisfactory rate of profit on its investment."

These arguments contain nothing that is particularly new in labor-management relations. Indeed, very few wage disputes have ever taken place where the arguments didn't run along roughly similar lines. However, when the union's demand and the company's offer are compared, it is evident that they were not actually very far apart, so that the lengthy stalemate which resulted and the unmovable positions adopted by both sides are, to say the least, remarkable.

How account for this? One contributing factor was the pre-strike strategy followed by both the union and the company. The union, on its part, entered negotiations asking for a 30c per hour increase, plus fringe benefits of an undetermined amount, clearly a demand out of all proportion to what the union expected to get. At that time, the company offered four cents, which the union rejected as an "insulting offer." A few months later, the company withdrew even this offer, explaining that it had not foreseen the slump in its market or the increased cost of steel. When the strike finally began the union had pared its demand from 30c to 4c per hour. Small wonder that, to avoid a tremendous loss of prestige, the union was forced to cling to this meagre remnant of its original demand.

The moral here would seem to be this: it is time that unions began to cut their demands more realistically to fit the purse. The day of the deliberately inflated monetary demand is fading. This device, which has for some years been a useful strategic and political manoeuvre for unions, may be expected to "backfire" more frequently as times become less opulent, with effects which can only be detrimental to union prestige and consequently to the chances of reaching a reasonable settlement quickly.

The pre-strike strategy of the company may likewise have contributed to the length of the eventual deadlock. The company withdrew its 4c offer on the ground that, when the offer was made, the company had misjudged what the future months might do to its market and its costs; yet on the eve of the strike we find the company committing itself indefinitely into the future without fear of possible misjudgment. "A strike, no matter how long it might last, would not alter

the company's position on the union's monetary demands by a fraction of a cent." Had the company's ability to read the future really improved that much? This statement, and a number of similar ones published prior to the strike, virtually precluded any further attempt to bargain, a result which, however justified in the view of the company, may nevertheless have had a considerable bearing on the length of time required to reach an eventual settlement.

The moral: bargaining is by nature a fluid process; published statements which have the effect of congealing bargaining policy over indefinite future periods should be avoided. Regardless of their apparent justice, such statements might at best force an armed truce. At worst, they might prolong negotiations to the point where the choice is one which neither party to collective bargaining finds easy to accept: the choice between being called unreasonable on the one hand or inconsistent on the other.

Most people who followed the dispute were impressed by the shifting of emphasis which took place among the various issues after the strike began. The issues were by no means as clearcut as the foregoing paragraphs may suggest. The company, for example, maintained that seniority was not an issue at all; that, on the eve of the strike, only 59 men were working out of seniority order, 11 because they were union officers and the rest for reasons which it claimed were clearly of an emergency nature. Yet the union insisted that this was one of the major issues. Likewise, most observers were surprised when, after several weeks of stalemate, the question of a province-wide agreement sprang into prominence and blocked the efforts of Mr. Daley to bring the parties together on the other issues. Company policy on job transfers in cases of relocation of plants also seems to have received much more emphasis as the strike progressed than it did at the beginning.

The obvious conclusion is the desirability, if such stalemates are to be avoided in future, of keeping the issues clearcut, of sticking to the original issues on which the dispute began until a settlement of them is reached. In the Ford strike, of course, it is probable that the company's extraordinary statements of future policy on the monetary issue in the last days before the strike, played a part in the union's subsequent emphasizing of issues which had previously been minor ones. But whatever the cause, the end result was a strike which dragged on much longer than was warranted by the issues over which it began last October.

Still another instructive aspect of the Ford strike bears upon the conciliation procedures which Ontario law requires be used before a strike may take place. Under the Ontario Labour Relations Act, either party may ask the government for conciliation services. This usually results in the setting up of a 3-man conciliation board, one representing the company, one the union, and the chairman appointed by the government. This board, according to the law, "shall endeavor to effect agreement between the parties." It has wide powers to compel testimony and collect evidence; it conducts hearings, considers the arguments on both sides and finally submits a report with recommendations.

It need scarcely be mentioned that Ford of Canada and its union have been among the leading consumers of conciliation services; indeed a review of the shortcomings of the law might be based on their experience alone. One shortcoming, illustrated in recent experience, is this: in many cases the end result of conciliation procedures seems to be not to effect agreement between the parties, but actually to drive them further apart. In practice the parties to labor disputes generally assail the conciliation board with briefs and rebuttals carefully prepared to justify their positions in the already-deadlocked dispute, the very doing of which leaves them more embedded in their own views than they

were before. Thereupon each waits in hope of being upheld in the board's report. When the report comes out, the "winner" parades the fact that he was supported by the conciliation board, while the loser laments the board's inability to see things in their true light. Unless reason intervenes in the meantime, the stage is set for trouble.

Is this evident in recent Ford experience? It would seem so. In December, 1951, just before the second-last Ford strike began, the report favored the union. Immediately the union pointed out that "detailed and extensive proof that the union's demands were just and the company's not is readily available in the report of the board of conciliation". The company, in this case the "loser," said it "cannot agree with a number of the recommendations" and wishes to make it clear anyway "that their findings are not binding upon the parties concerned in a labor dispute." When the 1954 strike began, the positions were reversed. The company, then the "winner," pointed out with some righteousness that the union had "shrugged off" the board's report, while the company had "fulfilled and gone beyond" its recommendations. As for detailed and extensive proof, the union this time had no comment.

The conclusion is that more of our conciliation boards should attempt to conciliate, to make peace between the parties, not to hold trials. Conciliation hearings should be something more than mere sounding-boards for divergent views in labor disputes. There is much to suggest also that the making of recommendations in favor of one or other party should have no place in conciliation procedures designed to effect agreement between them.

These are a few of the lessons which the Ford dispute suggests. Others can perhaps be found for in all human affairs mistakes are easier to see in retrospect than in advance. Let's not forget, though, that a frank review of past mistakes is one of the few ways we have of assuring improvement in the future.

## Solution for the Saar

Leopold Kober

► THE SAAR IS A TERRITORY that is not French. Politically, a union with France (such as exists at present on a *de facto* basis) would therefore mortgage the chance of a future peaceful development even if there were no objections to such an arrangement.

In the long run, small regions inhabited by a different nationality cannot satisfactorily be attached to large national blocks, if these blocks are organized as tightly centralized states, as is France. In decentralized federations like Switzerland, Canada, or the United States, a region like the Saar could easily be attached as a 26th canton, an 11th province, or a 49th state, without risking the loss of regional independence. As long as the rest of a union is composed of relatively small regions, local autonomies are never endangered. But where the partner of a union is a centralized giant, a small autonomous region attached to it politically has little chance of survival. Metropolitan France, not being herself a federal union, can never be a satisfactory union partner of so small a state as the Saar.

To this, the French say that they do not desire a political union anyway: all they want is a mere economic or customs union. Politically the Saar is, and shall continue to be, an independent state. France has even signed an agreement by which the ultimate authority over the Saar would be vested in the international organization known by the slightly ominous name of BRUTO.

If this were so, the problem of the Saar, in its independent, European, French, and German aspects, could probably be

solved without difficulty. But it is not so. Neither the present nor the contemplated future relationship between France and the Saar is that of a mere economic or customs union. The present status amounts in fact to a political union or rather, to avoid the pitfalls of terminology, to a status of *suzerainty* which is regulated, not by means of treaties as must be the case among sovereigns and political coequals, but by decree. The fact that the basic decrees now in force in the Saar have been ratified for the sake of formalism by a Saar legislature (which has not even been chosen in unfettered elections) makes little difference.

The customs union existing between the little Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and Belgium is a regular international union between coequals, founded on a treaty basis, and preserving the full sovereignty of its participants. Their continued sovereignty is underlined by the stipulation that the duration of the constituent treaty is limited, and that the union can be terminated upon its expiration. The same is true of France's own customs union with the Principality of Monaco. France's customs union with the Saar, on the other hand, has neither been established by a treaty, nor on the basis of a treaty (unlike the previous customs union which existed until 1935 and was based on provisions of the Treaty of Versailles). Its constituent document is a *decree* (Decree No. 48-576, of March 30, 1948). But only a political overlord can decree.

The text of this decree can leave no doubt as to the actual sovereignty which France exercises over the Saar at the present time. Article I, without reference to any sort of agreement, simply states that "The Saar territory shall, as far as customs are concerned, be amalgamated with the territory of France." Nothing was originally arranged for offering this far-reaching provision to the approval of the Saarlanders. Nor was anything arranged for enabling the Saarlanders to terminate a provision that went under the name of union but was actually an *Anschluss*. The last doubt as to the political nature of the Franco-Saar economic union was dispelled by subsequent French declarations to the effect that (a) her foreign relations were to be conducted not by the Saar but the French government and (b) that the "independence" of the Saar was to be safeguarded not by her own but by French troops.

But a state, not master over its foreign relations, can clearly have no international voice, can be nobody's partner in treaties, and can consequently not be considered independent. If Switzerland is in charge of Liechtenstein's foreign affairs, Italy in charge of San Marino's, and France in charge of Monaco's, this does not mean that Liechtenstein, San Marino, or Monaco are not masters over their international conduct. They have merely entrusted their larger neighbors with the task of representing them abroad. But they are free at any moment to denounce their agreements and resume their own representation. As a result, they are always the ultimate masters over their own affairs, domestic as well as foreign. No such reservation of rights was secured in the case of the Saar. And France's present commitment obviously overshoots the requirements of a customs union. Only political boundaries are defended by armies. A customs boundary must be defended, too, but by customs officials, and the enemies of a customs union are not foreign nations or soldiers but smugglers.

The existing France-Saar arrangement is thus primarily political in nature. It amounts not only to the economic detachment of the Saar from Germany, but to her political absorption by France, with the Saar having no power except that of ratifying what the French decide.

The only question is whether the contemplated future arrangement, proposed under the terms of the recent Paris agreements, would materially alter the present conditions

and be more satisfactory to the principal parties involved. Outwardly it might seem so. According to the new plan, the task of safeguarding the independence of the Saar and of representing the territory in its external relations would no longer be exercised by France but entrusted to BRUTO or some other international organization. Yet, in spite of this apparent Europeanization, the new device would again serve politically the interests of only one power, France. Unable to conduct her own international affairs, the Saar would obviously not be independent. Her Customs Union would continue to be an undeniable perpetual arrangement over which the Saarlanders would have no influence. And what France would lose in the official political domination of her government she would gain by the more important unofficial infiltration of her citizens, since the principal economic resources of the Saar are to be owned only by French interests. In this way she would recapture as private property what she has surrendered as public domain, leaving not only the status of the Saar substantially unchanged, but also the nature of the problem which the much hailed and seemingly short-lived Paris agreements were meant to solve.

Yet, this intricate problem of a disputed territory could perhaps be solved with relative ease if Europe's statesmen would only use the tools available to them in the manner in which they are meant to be used. They would have to do nothing but to turn the present Franco-Saar customs union into a real one. All that is needed is the establishment not of a Europeanized but of a genuinely independent Saar State with which France could, and would have to, enter into the same kind of *treaty* relationships which are required in her dealings with other sovereign states. She could then negotiate not only a regular international customs union treaty but, if the Saarlanders should so desire, treaties bearing on their international representation or even their military defence.

The crux of the problem seems to lie in the fact that the Saar and France must regulate their relationships by treaty. Treaties expire and can be denounced, allowing thereby for countless intermediary adjustments to changing conditions such as can never be achieved through rigid, inflexible, and permanent arrangements which, in the absence of expiration provisions, permit adjustments only through force of arms.

A genuine customs union between France and the Saar would give the French what the French want—the economic use of the Saar, and the knowledge that the wealth of its territory cannot be used to serve German war industry. It would satisfy the Germans because the Saar could under no disguise *politically* become a part of France and thus at least not add insult to injury. It would satisfy Europe because only a *truly* independent Saar State would cease to be a perpetual bone of contention between two neighbors who would otherwise always wish to annex it in order to forestall annexation by the other, even if it were placed under international administration. And lastly, it would provide the only dependable guarantee for *external* independence by creating an *internal* consciousness of separateness and sovereignty in the Saarlanders themselves. The result would be that, in the end, the Saarlanders could be relied upon to protect their political community with the same loyalty, love, and pride with which the Luxembourgers and Liechtensteiners protect theirs.

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## THE OLD FISCAL ORTHODOXY

(Continued from front page)

There is fortunately still time to cut taxes, preferably by raising personal income exemptions in order to benefit the lower income groups who have received precious little from the present Government since 1949. There is also time to unbalance the budget and feed into the economy some spending to replace the sum that has not been privately generated. Before spring, the country will need more than pious hopes from Ottawa if job opportunities are to become available for the expanding population. Instead of creating widespread uncertainty about his tax plans, Mr. Harris would do well to bring down an early budget containing not just crumbs for the most beleaguered, but real encouragement for the whole economy.

JAN MEISEL.

## Provincial Rights and the Ivory Tower

► THE DISPUTE between Mr. St. Laurent and Mr. Duplessis over provincial rights has had an academic sequel. President N. A. M. MacKenzie and Dean Henry Angus have written vigorous letters on the subject in the columns of the University of British Columbia's student newspaper, the *Ubysey*. Since both are renowned political scientists learned in the law, their difference of opinion would be an event in the profession at any time, but in the circumstances of a smouldering Dominion-Provincial controversy and a covenanted Royal Commission in Quebec, this academic controversy has been trumpeted by the press into a national affair. The *Winnipeg Free Press*, the Vancouver papers, and a number of newspapers in Quebec have given it full coverage and comment.

President MacKenzie believes that the national interest, in these times of stress and change, requires a strong national government with flexible constitutional powers. Dean Angus, in writing the first letter, had taken his stand on the moral obligation to live up to the terms of Confederation, with the full measure of provincial autonomy which that implies. Dean Angus points out that the Dominion collects income, corporation and succession taxes in ten provinces, but distributes them in grants under Dominion-Provincial agreements in only nine provinces, Quebec having stood apart in protest. Quebec has also refused federal grants for universities, and has imposed its own income tax (which it has a perfect constitutional right to do) to raise a sum sufficient so that the provincial government can make good to the universities the money they would otherwise have got from the Dominion. Dean Angus holds up this sturdy independence for our admiration. He warns that the federal government, using its taxing powers to the hilt and offering the provinces the choice between conditional Dominion grants and more taxes of their own, may "buy control" of the provincial governments. Any conditional grant gives the federal government some degree of control.

The Dominion grants to universities arose out of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Arts, Letters and Sciences (1951) and President MacKenzie, who was a member of that Royal Commission, has taken up their defence. He protests that Dean Angus overlooks "several of the most important human facts about our national life and the kind of world we live in." The federal government's tax policies are the result of two world wars and the present defence emergency. Further, though section 93 of the B.N.A. Act gives exclusive control of education to the provinces, the fathers of Confederation should be under-

stood as meaning only the schools by their term "education," and not the universities (which at that time were largely run by the churches) or any of the other agencies of public information and instruction, such as the press or radio. In these fields there is a Canadian national concern, and the federal government should have power to act. Lastly, Dean Angus' article, the President regrets, "plays into the hands of the 'Quebec Nationalist' " and "disregards the importance of Canadian unity."

As one Royal Commissioner to another, Dean Angus is quite entitled to reply, as he has, that he himself signed the Rowell-Sirois Commission report and endorsed its recommendation of National Adjustment grants from the Dominion to the provinces without strings attached. On these terms national unity would have been possible without the loss of either solvency or constitutional principle; but the recommendations of that Commission have never been fully implemented. National unity itself demands that the federal system should not be changed without free consent. "The consent has not, as yet, been forthcoming, and I cannot treat even 'several of the most important human facts about our national life and the kind of world we live in' as a substitute for consent."

Here he strikes the attitude and even the tone of the defiant Milton. But much as I like the Dean's attitude, I think I must reject one of his arguments, and also suggest that either good manners or the lack of space have prevented him from attacking the President's argument at its weakest point.

I would support Dean Angus by saying that a constitution must be to some degree inflexible if it is to serve its purpose of protecting us from whoever happens to think he knows what is best for the country. Consent should be given in a deliberate manner to changes in a federal constitution. This is no place to discuss the alternative procedures for establishing consent to amendments; but most people will agree that there are some parts of the constitution, including section 93, which should not be changed by the mere decision of the Parliament at Ottawa.

But is anything that Ottawa or Quebec is doing a violation of the constitution? Has anyone changed the constitution without consent? I thought it was generally agreed that the Dominion has the right to impose any sort of tax; that Quebec, like any other province, has the right to levy direct taxes, which includes income taxes; that the Dominion has the unrestricted right to spend its revenues as it pleases, including offering them as grants to provinces on such terms as the Dominion can validly make; that the provinces have the right to accept or reject such grants, as it pleases them (though it may not always be within their constitutional power to comply with some conditions which the Dominion might wish to impose). The present case, involving university grants and the Quebec income tax, seems to me to fall entirely within this constitutional framework. The Dominion has not, as far as I know, attached any conditions to its university grants with which the provinces could not comply constitutionally, ethically, legally and politically.\*

On the other hand, no one can force a province to accept a grant if it does not want it, and a province could, it seems to me, pass legislation if it liked, to prevent a university within its borders from receiving federal money directly. I can only think that the provincial government which refuses such a grant is foolish and perverse, but it has a right to be both if it likes.

To return to President MacKenzie's argument, I cannot

\*Dean Angus comments, "My point, of course, is that to offer grants to all provinces on terms that all cannot be expected to accept is, though, legal, unconstitutional in spirit."

see how it helps the Dominion government's case or the universities, to assert that "education" does not include universities. While it is of historical interest that the Fathers may have thought so, it can hardly alter the facts, first, that the Courts are not usually impressed by what the Fathers may have intended as opposed to what the B.N.A. Act actually says; and second, that in the intervening years "education" has definitely come to mean and include universities, which, unlike the press and radio, are primarily devoted to education. The B.N.A. Act, it seems to me, means that the provinces have exclusive rights to *legislate* concerning education, including universities. President MacKenzie says that it should not be admitted that section 93 confers on the provinces an exclusive power to legislate on education in the widest sense, because education, in the widest sense, includes "all those influences which shape and mould and influence human beings." To admit that the provinces have an exclusive right to legislate on everything that influences human beings would be disastrous, and would destroy the Dominion. But the courts would never admit so wide a definition of education, and any province's attempt to stretch the meaning of the word in its legislation would be rejected by the courts as "colorable."

The provinces have, I think, exclusive powers to *legislate* concerning education. On the other hand, I cannot see anything to prevent the Dominion from *spending its money* on educational institutions, including universities, controlled by provincial laws. It may be objected that the power to spend can be used so as to be virtually the power to legislate. So it may work out, though it equally well may not; for over thirty years the Dominion has been giving aid to the provinces for technical and vocational education, and we hear no complaints from the provincial premiers, not even Mr. Duplessis. If a grant had a legislative effect beyond the Dominion's powers, the courts would soon check it.

As long as the federal government is doing something within its constitutional powers, then the only "consent" required from any section of the nation is the consent given by living under the constitution, voting, sending representatives to Parliament, and taking part, either successfully or not, in the regular processes of political life. When a government's action is constitutionally valid, it needs no more consent than that; otherwise government grinds to a halt.

I agree also with the President that times of stress and change require strong power at the centre. But the courts have consistently held that Ottawa's power to legislate for the peace, order and good government of Canada takes precedence over provincial powers in times of national crisis. Unfortunately, the courts failed in the 1930's to recognize economic depressions as a national crisis, and have supported



SALAMANDERS—RICHARD T. LAMBERT

the "peace, order and good government" powers only during wars and their aftermath.

Quite likely I take too simple a view, not being a lawyer. The controversy began at the top of the hierarchy in which I am the low man. I should only add that it is a pleasure to discuss federalism with my classes at U.B.C. this year. Something seems to have got into them.

DAVID C. CORBETT.

## Koestler as Novelist

George Woodcock

► WHEN WE LOOK BACK over the literary record of the past quarter of a century in Western Europe, we realize that the element of social consciousness has not assumed that dominance which seemed almost inevitable during the 1930's. Most of the good post-war writers have lacked the political itch that inspired or destroyed so many of their immediate predecessors, and of those who regarded themselves as the socially progressive *avant garde* of the 'Thirties, many of the best have turned away, like Auden and Isherwood, into the once despised world of private sensibility.

Yet, though the self-conscious "social" movement in European literature belongs to the past, it asserted a profound and permanent influence on some of the most powerful writers of our age. These men have continued to be fascinated by the problems of individuals and masses caught in the process of political change, and around this subject they have written some of the important contemporary novels. Silone and Orwell, Malraux and Koestler—one cannot overlook their individual talents or their place in the literary tradition. Inevitably, though they do not represent the *only* significant kind of literature in our time, such books as *Bread and Wine* and 1984, as *Man's Fate* and *The Age of Longing* are likely to have a rôle in the history of literature as permanently symptomatic of the dilemma of man in society as the great political novels of the past, like *Caleb Williams*, *The Possessed* and *The Charterhouse of Parma*.

Of the four writers I have mentioned, Koestler seems, from his record up to the present, the least in literary stature. Having started as a journalist, he has only recently succeeded in shedding the glibness, the flair for the ephemerally sensational, which are the criteria of success in that calling. Yet these very features which link him so intimately to the present, while they have lessened the profundity of his work, have also tended to make him a more immediately sensitive recorder of our time. For Koestler is not merely, as some of his own statements might lead one to believe, the prophet of militant anti-Communism; he also reveals, more than any other contemporary writer, the dilemma of the socially conscious intellectual in our age, who seeks a revolutionary solution to social problems yet realizes that the very methods of revolution—as it has so far been practised—lead to the enslavement of the individual, and who is therefore forced to assume the rôle of the divided observer, caught in the philosophic ambiguities of ends and means.

Koestler has mapped out this dilemma in an essay entitled *The Yogi and the Commissar*. The Commissar represents the attitude which upholds Change from Without and considers that man's problems can be solved by a mere alteration in economic conditions. For him the end justifies the means, and thus he enters upon a degeneration of values that is destructive both to him, as a human being, and to his political end. The Yogi, at the other end of the spectrum, seeks Change from Within, but, in failing to communicate his own mystical uplift, attains a condition of inaction which

admits the continuance of physical evil without resistance. "The Yogi and the Commissar may call it quits" is Koestler's conclusion.

The dualism reflected in this attitude arises, I think, from the circumstances of Koestler's own career; he himself, as an active Comintern agent, once accepted the Commissar's blindness to the moral implications of politics, and since then he has shown a tendency to swing violently backward and forward between the opposing attitudes. But the rift between the Yogi and Commissar is not in fact the great abyss of Either/Or. It is true that in most cases the politician becomes the slave of his means, and that the visionary planner achieves little because he is blinded to anything but his end. Yet each in fact reaches his particular extremity because he fails to recognize that the duality is not one of necessity. The means is part of the end, the practice of the ideal, and it is for this reason that political policies using corrupt means end in corrupt achievements.

It is the attempt to solve the revolutionary's dilemma, seen at its most extreme in the opposition of Yogi and Commissar, that is the basic subject matter of Koestler's novels. The first of them, *The Gladiators*, played an important part in his own intellectual development, for it was written while he was emerging from his intellectual thralldom to the Communist viewpoint. The subject was the slave revolt in ancient Rome, under the gladiator Spartacus. The more Koestler sought in that distant historical scene the motives for the actions of the masses, the more he came to question the orthodox Marxist explanation of social changes. "Up to now," he records in his autobiographical volume, *The Invisible Writing*, "I had been critical of the Soviet leadership and the Comintern bureaucracy, but not of the basic teaching of Communism, which I regarded as historically correct, and as self-evident as the axioms of Euclid. Now, the more engrossed I became in my subject, the more questionable became the very foundations of the doctrine, the more cracks appeared in the wall around the 'closed system' and the more fresh air blew in."

*The Gladiators* thus became, not merely the story of the collapse of an antique rebellion, but also an allegory in modern political trends. Yet there is an evident failure to bridge the two, to form the link between the critical observer today, seeing his own age mirrored in the past, and that past itself. The main problem is not stated adequately in contemporary terms, while the picture of the age in which the real rebellion of Spartacus took place is never wholly convincing. Koestler's classical prototypes of the Russian revolutionaries are weak, partly because their motives do not fit their age, and partly because their creator is yet unwilling to admit the real cause of their failure—the corruption of power that has ruined so many revolutionary movements. Despite his better judgment, Koestler shows in *The Gladiators* a lingering loyalty toward the Commissars, and he also shows, concentrated in the hideous shadow of the cross on which the rebels die, a preoccupation with violence which, though it is refined as the years pass, lingers on in all his novels. Speaking against the totalitarians, Koestler has almost always the puritan's fascination for the evils he condemns.

*Darkness at Noon*, Koestler's second novel, steps from antiquity into the present. It relates the prison experiences and death of an old Bolshevik, Rubashov, arrested on a faked charge of counter-revolutionary activity. Its most striking characteristic is the subtlety with which Koestler has shown the doomed man trapped in his own political amorality until he is forced to submit willingly to the fate which his enemies have mapped out for him. Yet his insight shows Koestler, not as a great novelist, but rather as a

brilliant journalist of fiction, entering fully into the spirit of the contemporary social situation. There is very little of living humanity, of the full human essence, in these ruins of tragedy and evil, and in this failure to transmit compassion, rather than horror, lie the limitations of *Darkness at Noon*.

This book's most impressive scene, its deepest centre of terror, is that in which Bogrov, Rubashov's old comrade, is dragged along to execution while his fellow prisoners beat out the dead march on the doors of their cells. Here we have the powerful descriptive talent which can reproduce faithfully scenes of the kind that Koestler himself actually witnessed in his Spanish imprisonment. But this, once again, is a characteristic of the fictional journalist rather than the true novelist, whose art needs no such externalized mechanism to portray the growth of terror in a human mind. And here, also, we have violence emerging as a distorting theme in a book whose essential problem is really not one of violence but of intellectual dissolution.

*Arrival and Departure*, Koestler's third novel, is another study in motives. It is, in a sense, a psycho-analytical treatise on the revolutionary mind, written around the struggles of a disillusioned Communist caught in the no-man's-land of wartime Lisbon. Peter, the hero, wishes to enlist in the British forces to fight against the Nazis, but while he is waiting for the bureaucratic difficulties to sort themselves out, he has an affair with a French girl, and between the temptations of Love, represented by Odette, and Reason, represented by the psychoanalyst who treats him, he begins to lose his urge to fight, and to contemplate flight to America. Odette leaves, Peter suffers a breakdown, and during a prolonged analysis realizes that his revolutionary activity was motivated by a guilt and violence complex that arose out of a childish hatred for his brother. Finally, after a series of rather unconvincing changes of attitude, he does go to act as an underground agent for the British. The only explanation appears to be that his analysis has not in fact exorcized his feeling of guilt or his preoccupation with violence. As a novel it does not ring true; as an insight into the author's mind, into his own prolonged concern with violence, it is significant, and this impression is reinforced by Koestler's fourth novel, *Thieves in the Night*.

Koestler has had a long affection, pre-dating his Communist phase, for Zionism in its more militant forms, and *Thieves in the Night* is in fact a sympathetic study of the motives underlying Jewish terrorism in Palestine. Coming immediately after Koestler had stated his dilemma in *The Yogi and the Commissar*, *Thieves in the Night* shows its author coming down heavily on the side of the Commissar—a different kind of Commissar—and seeing salvation only in the man of action, the extremist fanatic whose imagination leaps beyond the dull and pedestrian plodding of the man of thought. This work represents the nadir of Koestler's negative phase, the end of the scepticism that in itself leads only in a circle of perplexity and destroys faith in man, as distinguished from the myths that too often rule him. It is Koestler's least satisfactory novel, a work of propagandist

journalism, written with skill and passion, yet lacking real insight.

But, if we are to judge by Koestler's most recent novel, *The Age of Longing*, *Thieves in the Night* appears to represent the end of a cycle, the final catharsis by which Koestler managed to purge himself of the violent urge. *The Age of Longing*, in my opinion, is the book in which Koestler comes to maturity as a novelist, as a real literary artist. Here the glibness that mars his early books is absent, and the terrifying scene of the contemporary political world is used as a stage on which the problems of modern man are projected with compassion and understanding. Koestler sets his novel in Paris a few years ahead, terrified under the threat of a Russian invasion; instead of producing another work of brilliant journalistic investigation into contemporary revolutionary problems, he here performs an act of the imagination and shows the pattern of our day in its total human implications.

Some critics have seen *The Age of Longing* as a warning that we should arm ourselves more surely against the Communist menace, and this explanation might fit in with some of Koestler's own propagandist utterances. But it is much too superficial an explanation for the novel as a whole, which presents, on a much more universal scale, the agonies of those who wait upon the doom of circumstances. There is a collective fate which none can escape, and some who try to avoid their individual fates, like the Russian novelist Leontiev, are damned by their past to failure. But at least in many of them there lurks the sense of dignity which no circumstances can destroy. And in the background, symbols of the intransigent human spirit, stand the religious heretics who have raised their struggle of the will against totalitarianism—the Fearless Sufferers. "They," says Leontiev, "have discovered that the main reason why men endure tyranny is fear. From this they conclude that if they could liberate themselves from fear, tyranny would collapse and freedom follow." Perhaps the Fearless Sufferers also are individually doomed by circumstances, but they are portents of the regenerative powers of the human personality, and they are also signs of a change in Koestler's attitude, for there were no Fearless Sufferers in *Darkness at Noon*. *The Age of Longing* is not merely the product of a clear and fearless mind. Koestler's other novels are that, and yet they fail to be a great deal more than extremely talented examples of fictionalized journalism. What distinguishes this last novel is the way in which its author has grasped at last the elemental motives that preserve in men, despite their collective follies, a personal longing for decency and love; he has displayed these motives with compassion and restraint, and yet the scale is epic. If western civilization survives, *The Age of Longing* may well be recognized as one of the most imaginative accounts of this, its great age of crisis.

### Fox

The light that limped in lantern circles down the road  
Lit the grass-heaved ditches and the cobbled stars of stone,  
And came upon him, bleeding in the streams cold sleep;  
Fox, red into fawn, sharp as a coin and half ruined  
While blind signals pilfered his flickering wit.  
Spasm to spasm I watched, then touched his wet-smooth fur,  
And he snap-jawed at the air, splashed for a furious time,  
Alive again in a newer flesh, then blinked back to the old.  
I, thinking that misery ended him, tilted my gun  
And shattered his life. The lantern splattered the leaves;  
Green, back through the woods, the light fumbled a path;  
The stars hardened, and a fresh breeze screamed in the trees.

J.A.B.

*The Canadian Forum is interested in receiving articles on public affairs, science, art, and literature, especially in the newer developments of those aspects of life in this country.*



HOLIDAY—RICHARD T. LAMBERT

## Socialism à la Cole

► G. D. H. COLE began to make himself known as a writer on socialism away back in the days when World War I was about to break out. He was then leading a revolt against the Webbs. And he has been pouring out books and pamphlets ever since. I suppose he must have done more than any other contemporary writer and teacher to affect the way in which Englishmen of the left think about social and economic problems. Even when he hasn't made converts or built up a school—and he has generally plowed a rather lonely furrow—his readers have been compelled constantly to think about the challenge which he has presented to them. Moreover, he has been remarkably consistent in this thought. He began with Guild Socialism as a protest against "Sidney-Webbicalism"; (i.e. bureaucratic state-socialism), and he has always been concerned with the fate of the ordinary little man in modern industrial society. He has always been trying to find methods by which the little man may achieve some significance and responsibility in a world dominated by bigness, in a managerial society. His thinking has never been corrupted by personal ambition for office or political power. He is the most remarkable individualist among British socialists.

His latest main enterprise in authorship has been a large-scale history of socialist thought. The two volumes<sup>1</sup> that have so far appeared bring the story down to the end of the 1880's, and a third volume is no doubt in preparation dealing with the period of Mr. Cole's own lifetime. The work is comprehensive in scope, covering both Britain and the European continent; in fact one of its most valuable features is the way in which it brings out the connection between British and continental developments. ("The American continent has never produced a Socialist thinker of major rank," remarks our author with a certain relish.) The first volume is mainly a series of chapters on individual thinkers from the revolution of 1789 to the revolution of 1848. Volume II, dealing with a period when socialist ideas were penetrating the masses, is concerned more with the development of movements; it has more historical narrative than the first volume, which tends a little too much to be a dry intellectual analysis of what individuals said in their individual books. It has an interesting account of the Paris Commune of 1870, and it traces out all the complex relationships of Marxians, Proudhonists, Bakuninists, Syndicalists and the rest of them.

Several themes stand out in Mr. Cole's treatment of his subject. One is his emphasis that socialism in its earlier meaning had nothing to do with state action. The early socialists all had something in common, but it was not the bureaucratic state. "They all take their starting point from the recognition of the key importance of the 'social problem' and from the belief that men ought to take some collective or associative action to deal with it. They are all sharply hostile to laissez-faire, to the conception of a natural law which will somehow work out for good. They all rest on a belief in the virtues of collaboration as against competition, or of planning as against what their opponents call free enterprise . . . Socialism, as the word was first used, meant collective regulation of men's affairs on a cooperative basis, and with the emphasis not on politics, but on the production and distribution of wealth and on the strengthening of socializing influences in the lifelong education of the citizens in cooperative, as against competitive patterns of behaviour.

. . . It will be observed that in this description of the common characteristics of early Socialist doctrine there is not a word about the proletariat or the class-struggle."

Mr. Cole is attracted by these early "utopian" socialists. Throughout his two volumes he obviously leans towards those men who favored voluntary communities rather than authoritarian regulation. He likes Owen and Fourier rather than St. Simon. His treatment of Bakunin shows more sympathy than his treatment of Marx. The anarchist type of communism obviously has more in common with his own guild socialism than has the Marxist. And he goes sentimental over William Morris. "Such men may not be very good at making the kingdom of heaven, but they are of it," Morris, he remarks, was entirely lacking in the will to power; he never wanted to lead, only to help. And people like this, he adds, help to keep the cause sweet.

Mr. Cole is also at the end of his second volume, clearly getting ready to put the founders of Fabianism in their place. He devotes a good deal of space to explaining the contributions of Hyndman and Morris and other forerunners of the Fabians; and he has unearthed one unpleasant little bit of Fabian history. On the unemployment question in the 1880's a Fabian publication recommended compulsory military service as a means of reducing unemployment and training the workers in the idea of public service. This was Sidney Webb's first piece of writing for the Society. And at this point in his narrative one can almost hear Mr. Cole smacking his lips.

This history of socialist thought is of very high value indeed. Most books written by socialists on this subject tend to gush too much. They are weak on critical analysis. Every socialist goose is a swan to them, even if the geese don't agree with each other. We have needed something to counter Sir Alexander Gray's first-class piece of hostile analysis and criticism, *The Socialist Tradition: Moses to Lenin* (1946). (Mr. Cole, in his bibliography will only admit that this book is "slight but amusing"). Because he has very definite views of his own, Mr. Cole provides very definite and clear criticism.

This last July the *New Statesman* published a pamphlet<sup>2</sup> by Mr. Cole entitled *Is This Socialism?* It contains thirty-two close-packed pages of reasoned argument against the policies or lack of policies of the moderate leaders who at present control the Labor party. It is to be followed in due course by a second pamphlet on socialist foreign policy.

"This pamphlet," says Mr. Cole, "is about Socialism, by which I mean nothing less than a society without classes, and not one in which a new class structure has replaced the old. . . . It is an attempt to indicate a way of action to those Socialists who feel a sense of frustration because Socialism means to them something radically different from the managerial Welfare State." Mr. Cole's main objection to official party policy is that the Labor government did not attack inequality at its roots, the inequalities of property as distinct from inequalities of income. He maintains that Labor must abolish inheritance above certain minimum amounts if it really means to move towards the classless society. As things are, the new social welfare state is creating a new aristocracy of labor officials in public service. He gives a searching analysis of the present class structure in Britain. He thinks that what Britain is achieving is not a classless society but "an Anglicized version of the American conception of democracy," the "open" society which is in fact still closed to the majority of the people. He is especially furious at the acceptance of titles by trade union leaders, and at Labor's

<sup>1</sup> THE FORERUNNERS 1789-1850: A HISTORY OF SOCIALIST THOUGHT, VOLUME I: G. D. H. Cole; Macmillan, pp. xi, 346; \$4.25.

MARXISM AND ANARCHISM 1850-1890: A HISTORY OF SOCIALIST THOUGHT, VOLUME II: G. D. H. Cole; Macmillan; pp. xi, 482; \$5.00.

<sup>2</sup> IS THIS SOCIALISM?: G. D. H. Cole; *New Statesman and Nation* pp. 32; one shilling.

acquiescence in the continuance of snob schools, which, he says, naturally continue to pour out a steady stream of snobs. He wants more industrial democracy, the trade unions participating in the making of industrial policy. "State ownership is only half the battle; the other half is real participation by the workers in control, not only at the top but at every level from the work-group upwards."

After all the rhetorical and demagogic mush which has been the main contribution of the Bevanites of late, this pamphlet is a heartening presentation of the point of view of British Labor's left wing. But one must remark that here, as throughout his career, Mr. Cole is asking more for the workers in the way of equality than they ask for themselves, and demanding more from them in the way of social responsibility than they are willing to give. The chief obstacle to his equalitarian socialist society is, now as always, not the opposition of the governing classes but "the damned wantlessness of the poor."

FRANK H. UNDERHILL

## Theatre Review

► THE AUDIENCE was huge. They sat in their seats silently gazing around and listening; they rolled back and laughed themselves silly; they leaned forward and stared silently; and finally they beat their hands together again and again to pry the great golden curtains open for a minute more. This was the audience at "The Dream"—the Old Vic Company's festival and touring production of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

The people swung out of the theatre: a motley crew. White furs, brown furs, black furs and nondescript. Cloth coats, raincoats, baggy tweeds and tight coats. There was an aura of excitement and satisfaction as they left the huge theatre to turn into a hockey arena again at the stroke of twelve. Two gentlemen separated themselves from the crowd and walked apart. I couldn't help but overhear them, for in the course of their argument they became quite heated. One claimed that "The Dream" was a magnificent piece of theatre and that he had never enjoyed anything so much. The other said that it was an abominable hodge-podge which desecrated the name of Shakespeare and Mendelssohn at the same time.

This point of difference seems to be a common one. The New York critics have been notably cool while audiences have been notably warm, buying up seats and filling them with response. The mixed reactions are probably due to the mixture of theatre that the Old Vic created along with the mixture of worlds which Shakespeare created. But I don't think that on this basis one can dismiss it as merely a crazy mixed-up show. The problem which was undertaken: to express "The Dream" as fully as possible, by word, by music and by motion, was remarkably well resolved. The music of Mendelssohn was neatly tied in as an introduction to set the mood, as distraction for scene-changing, as accompaniment to the dances and scurrying of fairyland, and as the music for the wedding marches of the finale. The dancing, too, was skillfully blended: dancers were extras or even speakers in Shakespeare's plan and then imperceptibly their master became either of the choreographers, Helpmann and Ashton.

But the skill, the talent, the costumes, and magic dust of fairyland could not conceal the fact that it was not a logical problem to have undertaken. The music to a large extent duplicates the play and interrupts its purpose whenever it is introduced. The dancing, too, although a certain amount is legitimate in this play, often becomes a duplication. These different forms of entertainment have their own

conventions and demand a different kind of co-operation from the audience. Giving the three an equal billing only serves to confuse—to detract from the unity. In music one's imagination is allowed a free range. Any number of things is suggested, though none defined. It deals far more with mood and general atmosphere than with any specific ordering of events. The audience becomes involved in a musical flight of fancy when it is required to switch suddenly to an appreciation that comes from the very particularization and limited expression peculiar to language. Then again, they become involved in the intrigue and interplay of character and are asked to suspend this interest to follow the expression of beauty in wordless motion. These varied kinds of dramatic intensity, plus the peculiar music hall flavor of Stanley Holloway, kept turning the theatre into concert hall and ballet theatre successively. Decoration may enrich Shakespeare but elaboration only interferes with him.

In spite of these objections, it must be admitted that "The Dream" was vastly entertaining. The combined talent of the performers and the magnificence of the design by the Ironsides made the transitions easy. Nobody could really be unhappy, except possibly the bard, and even he must have been intrigued had he seen it. Holloway, Helpmann and Shearer were the three top trump in the grand-slam bid (although it was really a no-trump hand of thirteen face-cards). As the Queen of the Fairies, Miss Shearer was ideally graceful and regal, but her voice could not match her movements in color or conviction. Of course, it is very difficult to talk at all when using one's breath for dancing. Helpmann managed to combine both his roles without strain. He strode around the stage sporting his yards of gauze train, he spoke imperiously, and he moved with faery swiftness, lightness and power. The "Nocturne" of Ashton in which they danced their reunion, showed Miss Shearer to advantage in the familiar position of high arabesque rather than high comedy. It would not be fair to judge her acting ability on a performance given in these peculiar circumstances, but we already have proof of her dancing ability, and so would be sorry to see her give up one for the other.

Holloway's Bottom the Weaver had all the charm of Holloway the comedian, but somehow he made it indistinguishable from the charm of Bottom the actor. The direction of Michael Benthall in the so-called "low-life scenes" had that same feeling of comic inventiveness that we have seen at Stratford in the direction of Tyrone Guthrie. The coy machinations of Bottom the ass in the cocking of his ears and blinking of his eyelashes, and the theatrical shenanigans of the final act were excruciatingly funny. In these parts at least one felt the spirit of Shakespeare was foremost. I particularly liked Ann Walford's Hermia, an independent girl, but affectionate. Another that I liked was that delightful romping, improper figure, Puck, as played by Philip Guard. He had such elastic movement.

The difficulty in talking of this production is that there is no logical point at which to stop describing it. It was huge. The sets for the woods scenes suggested vast recesses of untamed foliage and mystery, and for the court scene vast halls of pillared marble. The cast, magnificently attired, did each his or her duty with varying degrees of excellence; the orchestra was in there pitching, also the dancers and singers; the lighting was on the bit, in fact all the details of such an ambitious project were co-ordinated and attended to down to the flying apparatus for the final glorious ascent of Oberon and Titania into the wings.

One can quarrel with the problem undertaken, but not with its resolution. It was a dream of a dream.

WENDY MICHENER.

### At This Height

At the height of loving  
There were views down  
By steeples into the gardened  
Privities of the town.

All of the steeples failing,  
To a spire,  
Left a cubic-mile  
Vacancy for desire.

How could four bell-towers  
Silent at night  
Mark off in civic  
Boundaries our delight?

Love was too swelling  
For streets to serve  
As edges, or for the hill  
To lend its curve.

Theodelights of loving  
Surveyed the swerving  
Galaxies, pushing on tripods  
Past their outbound curving.

From this height of loving  
No eye looks down  
For steeples or the gardened  
Privities of the town.

Alan Brown.

### Exiles

#### I

Through the zero town  
A boy, bundled and thin,  
Whistles and saunters down  
With a frozen violin.

Hard pioneers chopped out  
His vast suburb. The lad  
Fiddles but with a doubt  
A Mari Usque Ad.

#### II

Would you try to strangle  
A light with clamps  
Along the cord? A paranoid angle  
For turning-out of lamps.

And yet she swore  
That in the simple act  
Of closing one door  
Exclusion was a fact.

Oh, a colonial mistake,  
Closing doors behind,  
Forgetting the persistent ache  
Of a spanning mind.

In the room voices, her voice,  
Pretended to be inside.  
But leaving is choosing. Her choice.  
I stayed. She went, or died.

Fine but for resurrection  
And a scene, likely in blue,  
Of my degrading genuflection,  
Ecstatic, once, and tying on her shoe.

Alan Brown.

## Film Review

► THE BRITISH HAVE currently supplied the local screens with some films which while not of the first rank will provide quiet satisfaction for those patrons jaded with beefy Biblical epics and the procession of one uninteresting face after another across the widening Hollywood screen. For one aspect of British films which commands attention is the diversity of human physiognomy manifest therein, particularly in the masculine sphere. What a pleasure to behold the ugly seamed face of Victor McLaglen again, its mighty proportions aging in the heroic fashion of some ancient bull mastodon, and the countenance of such a consistent ham as Alastair Sim dominates the screen if only by the dramatic quality of the eyes and the pensively drooping mouth. The male actor, *genus Britannicus*, commands by his very bone structure alone. When to this is added the magnificent bearing most Englishmen seem born to and the clear musical enunciation in which they are trained, personality or intelligence as acting assets are secondary ornaments and the ordinary well-groomed Londoner could step off the street to make an adequate appearance in any average quality British film.

The recent success of Jack Hawkins, an actor neither of variety nor marked intelligence, illustrates this admirably. Off-screen he looks, walks and talks in the typical manner of a successful London business-man. When he appears in a film such as *The Seekers*, however, his presence as the man-of-action is both believable and entertaining because his physique and rough-hewn features are so patently masculine that one naturally accepts his doing masculine adventurous things. This is no Tony Curtis, all dressed-up for play-acting, who may some day be a man. There is a certain quality of tribal masculinity which most English males apparently absorb from their native habitat that has led Hollywood producers to hire so many of them recently in the search for talent to replace the aging big names of the American film world. Gable, Stewart, Tracy, Cooper, Bogart, Wayne, etc., are available after all for only a limited number of films per year. This is one reason for the currently successful careers of such immigrants as Edmund Purdom, Richard Burton, Stewart Granger, Michael Wilding, James Mason and others, some of whom can also act. This manner of filling a talent vacuum is evident in Darryl F. Zanuck's recent pretentiously pedestrian effort *The Egyptian*; Englishmen take all the casting honors in representing the social and priestly elite as well as the adventurers in their midst, while the general *mêlée* of fellahin and bullyboys reveal themselves in the accents of well-fed studio extras. Michael Rennie's appearance as Bernadotte in *Désirée* epitomizes this type of actor,—tall, every inch the guardsman in Napoleonic uniform, a deep resonant voice, and hollows and protrusions in the bone structure of his face which are a marvel to contemplate. Indeed it is difficult to think of an English-born actor in recent film annals who has not been interesting anatomically, with the notable exception of Alec Guinness who must act constantly and skillfully to compensate for his lack of physical presence. Such character actors as Charles Laughton, Peter Ustinov, Findlay Currie or Robert Morley remind us of the incredible variety of the human species. Ronald Colman, Claude Rains, Cary Grant, Laurence Olivier and those who have served as romantic leads at some time are also individuals in appearance as well as personality, in contrast to a long established Hollywood star like Robert Taylor whose features were once so symmetrical and smooth that he scarcely looked alive and who has merely puffed and sagged over the years.

On the other hand, Gregory Peck, currently appearing in

*The Purple Plain*, moves easily among Englishmen. His haunted hawk-like features handsomely reflect the masculine duress of this Burmese adventure story set in a haze of heat and impenetrable jungle. As a Canadian pilot serving with the RAF in Burma, he carries the film throughout, even when it rests on full-screen shots of his big bloodshot eyeballs. Any real tragedy has been carefully skirted in the action of the film although the elements of it are mixed in to add body to an otherwise superficial yarn. This is a superior film because of its air of plausibility which sustains the interest of the audience to the end.

In *The Seekers* the most interesting people are the Maoris who unconsciously appear to be more cultured, honest and handsome than the English soldiers-of-fortune attempting to gain a foothold in New Zealand. This movie is slowly paced and anti-climactic, some of the most exciting incidents occurring at the beginning, but the background of gushing hot springs and fern forest is consistently absorbing. And for once meddling settlers get their due and are wiped out to the last man. Again the English have captured the reality of the situation, the romance is an afterthought.

Scottish tribes come in for some jibes in a comfortable little picture called *Trouble in the Glen* which Herbert Wilcox has directed in a spirit of fey bantering. The whimsy is abetted by the curious mischances of a process called Trucolor which turns Orson Welles' false moustache and eyebrows blue, Margaret Lockwood's makeup orange, and a pair of corduroy trousers the most astonishing shade of yellow ochre to which any cords ever aspired. Welles is the ogreish laird of the castle with a daughter who has a high opinion of herself despite Miss Lockwood's obvious need to have her teeth fixed. Victor McLaglen is the chief of a local band of tinkers which has a centuries' old right to poach in the laird's lochs. And there is also an American who gets along with everybody and has a little daughter who believes in chivalry. They all become involved in a tangle of local intrigue which goes its merry fairy-tale way.

*The Belles of St. Trinians* was a pleasant surprise since such an extended joke might have been a bore after the first reel. But George Cole as a character known as Flash 'Arry, a spiv among those "in tryde" on the sidewalks of London and general "invisible man" and fixer, carries the comic honors to the end. He even outdoes his hilarious debut as a comedian in the witty political farce of a few years ago, *Top Secret*. As for the rest of the film, the situations are mercifully the thing rather than the little girls who surge about, a horrible rabble of screaming monsters. For those with a taste for a little morbidity, this is their dish, well-served; for those satiated with Alastair Sim, indigestion.

JOAN FOX.

## NFB

War On Want	16 & 35 mm. 15 mins. b&w
Bush Doctor	16 & 35 mm. 11 mins. b&w
Eye Witness No. 63	16 & 35 mm. 11 mins. b&w

► MANY OF LIFE'S unpleasant aspects are seldom depicted in documentaries these days, unless they happen to affect people who are removed by distance and whose plight can be attributed to a supposedly less satisfactory way of life than our own. It speaks poorly for many of our fellow beings that while they will comment on, and express understanding of, the shortcomings of life, shall we say, in Asia, they are sensitive to social criticism of their own way of living, particularly when it is contained in the influential and disturbing medium of film. Such criticism is even less welcome should the film be sponsored by the Government, the current attitude being that the Government has no

business providing film makers with money to make films in which they express thought-provoking opinions about disturbing social ills.

For this reason we have come to accept the fact that we cannot expect from the National Film Board any outspoken films about the shortcomings of our way of life to balance the many telling us how satisfactory it is. Odd as it may seem, objections are frequently made by what films say verbally rather than what they show visually, even though pictures are far more affecting than words; but many of our film makers overlook this, and seldom use the subjective powers of the camera in an appeal to thinking people. For example, what is shown as the background to a routine subject frequently tells us more than the main story. These thoughts are brought to mind by three of the Board's recent films made for showing in theatres, inherent in which are incidental matters of concern.

*War On Want* deals with poverty in Ceylon, and shows how Canada, as a member of the Colombo Plan and UNESCO, is assisting in improving living conditions there. Being far from home, this picture can speak its mind and the hunger, disease, ignorance and illiteracy we see is saddening and disturbing. Directed by Gordon Burwash and made in co-operation with the United Nations Film Board and the Government of Ceylon, it is marred only by the over-written commentary which is over-dramatized at a non-stop rate by John Drainie. *Bush Doctor*, written and directed by Jean Palardy, shows how Dr. Paul-Leon Rivard, living in the frozen, snow-covered bushland of Northern Quebec, takes care of the sick in a territory the size of Nova Scotia. To keep in touch with missionaries and patients he uses a radio built by himself. This selfless doctor is naturally the main subject in this well-made film, but the director has also given us some idea of the conditions under which the Cree Indians live, for when the doctor goes to visit a sick child we cannot help but notice the pitiful home and wonder why the Indians must live like this. This is a subject for another film, and is closely related to the increasing number of tragic fires in bushland homes which are taking the lives of children. Finally, *Eye Witness No. 63* tells us how the mink fur trade is prospering and shows how fur coats are made. The picture points out that many of the animals whose fur is used are specially reared, and, we hope, killed painlessly, but it does not mention how many animals die in agony in traps each year to satisfy the vanity of women with more money than compassion, although the subject itself turns the thoughts of an audience interested in this matter in this direction. Such is the power of film makers to convey thought-provoking details through the camera's subtle power of implication. There are times, however, when one would prefer to see some unvarnished facts.

*Films from the Commonwealth* (distributed by the NFB): *New Zealand Cheese*, an interesting and appetizing account of the processes followed in the manufacturing of famous New Zealand cheeses; *Telephone Talk* is a humorous picture showing how the telephone works and the efforts being made by the New Zealand Post Office to provide everybody with a telephone; *The Steelworker*, from Australia, is a vivid and well-photographed description of steel men, their work and their home life.

GERALD PRATLEY.

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## Turning New Leaves

► MODERN POETRY differs from nineteenth century poetry mainly by being more simple and limited in theme and structure, but more varied and complex in texture. It says less in a more complicated way. One of the most striking things about such fine poets as Wallace Stevens, Hart Crane and Dylan Thomas is how they can spin an endless series of patterns on such a small base. Even (or perhaps especially) *The Waste Land* is thematically simple and narrow. Almost all its myths and symbolic characters are analogous to one another. Its structural method is variations on a theme, its thematic grammar an endless chain of subjects and complements linked by the verb "to be" or its equivalents. As Eliot puts it, "Just as the one-eyed merchant, seller of currants, melts into the Phoenician Sailor, and the latter is not wholly distinct from Ferdinand, Prince of Naples, so all the women are one woman, and the two sexes meet in Tiresias." The surface of Eliot's variations is thick, with images superimposed on images, but the theme is not (whatever its import-

ance). This thematic thinness is quite apparent if one compares *The Waste Land* with earlier pastoral elegies like *Lycidas*, the *Immortality Ode*, *Adonais*, or even *In Memoriam*. A similar development can be seen from Romantic to Modern music; the twelve tone system, for example, reduces each piece of music to a richly elaborated series of variations on a very limited theme.

The thickness of texture and narrowness of theme which I have attributed to much Modern poetry is observable in A. J. M. Smith's new volume, *A Sort of Ecstasy*.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Smith has been a leader and spokesman of Modern Canadian poetry for nearly thirty years, and the contents of this volume cover the whole period. A superficial glance at it might make some readers class Mr. Smith among the Oxford undergraduates of Auden's *Letter to Lord Byron* whose voices rang out loud and clear, "Great Poetry is classic and austere." His earlier volume *News of the Phoenix* might even have suggested those undergraduates who "bought and praised but did not

<sup>1</sup>A SORT OF ECSTASY: A. J. M. Smith; Ryerson (Michigan State College Press); pp. 55; \$3.75.



PEN DRAWING—JAMES AGRELL SMITH

read Aquinas." But the new one, although it includes a good deal from its predecessor, omits most of the devotional verse (in which Mr. Smith, writing as a sort of latter-day Herbert or Christina Rossetti, was never at his best) and makes clear what should have been clear enough before, that whatever he may say in some poems about using words "as clear and as cold as our ice," he is a rhetorician with a good many arrows in his quiver, some of them unwieldy and feather-laden. They are not all "arrows of direction, spears of speed."

Some of his poems waddle heavily under a weight of clotted, emblematic imagery and exclamatory lyricism in the manner of the later metaphysicals, or accumulate the props of a Sitwellian "tinsel paradise," others sketch the outlines of a cavalier lyric or try to suggest the colloquial sensuality and concentrated ecstasy of the later lyrics of Yeats. Such elaborations of poetic texture are sometimes delightful (as in "The Plot Against Proseus," "A Hyacinth for Edith," and, to some extent, "The Common Man"); sometimes they are dwarfed by the implied comparison (as the charming "With Sweetest Heresy" is dwarfed by our memory of Yeats); frequently they try too hard for sophisticated wit or the ventriloquism of E. E. Cummings and merely become tediously facetious (as in "Noctambule" and "Souvenir du Temps Perdu") or they load the obvious with a thick crust of metaphor and symbol (as in "The Bridegroom" and "Bird and Flower"). In "The Bridegroom," for example, the central figure begins in the state of innocence, moves to the state of experience, and then has to make the best of the change, knowing that he can't get back to his innocent bride. This traditional theme—the mature recognition of lost innocence, and its possible compensations—has been made so much of by a Milton, a Blake, a Wordsworth or a Thomas, that I am a little distressed by the jejune elaboration with which Mr. Smith conceals how little of the theme's potentiality he has been able to explore. In "Bird and Flower" he is concerned with the difficult balance of Christian humanism, but the imagery pretends to a far more complex treatment of the subject than the poem justifies:

A spiritual pigeon catapults the  
Air around you; a loaded violet  
Is dangerous in your fur. Tenderness, set  
Like a mousetrap or poised like a bee,  
Falls from you (God's angry love). Lucky  
The lean communicant whose table's set  
With you; he banquets well, and rises fed  
With innocence and Apollonian energy.

Some holy men so love their cells they make  
Their four grey walls the whole damned stinking world,  
And God comes in and fills it easily.  
Your Christian bird and Grecian flower twirled  
In gamblers' spirals sets a trickier stake,  
Grounded, o Love, in holiness and joy.

Mr. Smith is at his best in two sorts of poem: (1) the descriptive (in which the imagery is the poem and does not need to be justified by the poem) and (2) the poem about poetry, defining the sort of clear, cold, precise and economical beauty that the author particularly respects. The two categories often merge or become reflections of one another; the austere Canadian landscape symbolizes the austere beauty of the ideal poem or *vice versa*. I am thinking of such successful pieces as "The Lonely Land," "The Circle," "To Hold in a Poem," "Swift Current," or the superb one which ends the volume.

Of the three young Canadian poets in *Trio*<sup>2</sup> (Gael Turnbull, Phyllis Webb, E. W. Mandel) Mr. Mandel shows some of the surface excess that I find difficult to accept in Mr.

Smith. "Not Poppy nor Mandragora" superimposes a bloated mountain of witty allusion on a mole of rock. Here, and in other poems like "Estevan Saskatchewan" or the Val Marie group, the pretentious superstructure is simply more than the very modest building can stand. Like the Laputan architects, Mr. Mandel is inclined to build from the top down. But when he manages to suggest some sort of narrative complexity underneath the thick crust of mythological allusions and rapidly shifting metaphors, the result is often impressive. The myths become myths, and not just groups of mythological personages. Mr. Mandel's best poems seem to focus into a single concentrated picture all the ramifications of a complicated situation, with its past and future and endless possibilities of human choice and destiny. The group of six poems which opens his section of *Trio* forms a loosely inter-related series of such poems, of which the third and fifth are particularly fine. Brief quotations can not do justice to these poems—the whole is much better than the parts—and I therefore quote the third complete:

They chose among us in the fall of the year,  
by lot, behind fierce masks designed of sign  
to ward off the imminent descent of the sun people;  
someone talked of a dying god, as if  
the young ones among us believed in that  
any more, others cautioned us against the voices  
we were always supposed to hear and these  
were stubborn about the women crying.  
I remembered the face of the one who brought me here  
when they drew my name in the hall,  
it was her persuasions in the beginning,  
something about fathers.

Like the others, before this

I saw only their breasts that appeared on the walls,  
legs moving in unison, the swaying of sweat-stained  
bodies and their half closed eyes:  
all the talk about signs when I knew  
the boys were only waiting for the time  
when the women undressed, as they always did,  
snickering  
in those same fields that make a dawn in vision  
where birds begin to live in rocks and screams.  
It is hard to feel free of accusation  
because of eyes  
although there is a difference between revelation  
and action belied into life, between  
believing in voices  
and knowing the chances that we have to take.

Here, at any rate, the many-sided allusions to Athens' yearly sacrifice to the Minotaur are balanced by the complexity of the picture of adolescence which Mr. Mandel is building up. The parts of the poem are really adequate to one another. Mr. Mandel's best poems are very rewarding and I expect to read them a good many times.

In Louis Dudek's introduction to *Trio*, he suggests that the attractive simplicity of Gael Turnbull begins by misleading the reader, "only to arrest him later with the deeper purpose and concern for people that motivates his poems." It is always a pleasure to find a writer who promises less than he gives, and Mr. Turnbull, in such poems as "Line for a Bookmark," "In a Strange City" and "Love Poem -1-," does just that. I am less sure of what Mr. Dudek calls his "puckish humour." So long as it remains puckish, it fits; but the temptation of civilized wit and biting social satire is apparent at the edges of his poetry, and they need careful handling in conjunction with *sancta simplicitas*. The most successful combination of the simple and the sophisticated is the account of a railway journey back from the North, "Lumber Camp Railway." Here they alternate rather than

<sup>2</sup>TRIO: Gael Turnbull, Phyllis Webb, E. W. Mandel; Contact Press; pp. not numbered.

mix. For me this is not only Mr. Turnbull's longest poem, but perhaps his best as well; it may also point out a direction for his development. It is hard to know just where a poet with Mr. Turnbull's particular sort of talent goes next. I suggest a narrative poem or two, and not on too small a scale. Here is perhaps the most challenging form of all for a contemporary poet. Although there have been a few good narrative poems in the last forty years, they have been sports of nature, off the main contemporary paths. The tradition has gone to seed and needs to be rediscovered or remade, from the bottom up. This does not mean imitating E. A. Robinson, or E. J. Pratt, or even Earle Birney. It may seem perverse to suggest this job to a poet as obviously lyrical as Mr. Turnbull. I do suggest it, however, for what it's worth.

I wouldn't suggest it to the third member of the trio, Phyllis Webb. Miss Webb is what she is. Her astrigent, angular verse darts from perch to perch. By the time we have touched the edge of an image or the echo of a phrase, two or three more have passed by, caught and released in Miss Webb's highly selective net. I see nothing inevitable in all this. Miss Webb isn't angular because she is positing something in her poem which demands angles. She just likes angles *per se*. Maybe at last I have discovered some poetry to which that long-lost and much-maligned term "pure poetry" really applies:

The plane writes love large  
across our sky  
white as light  
as round as blown  
as the proverbial  
cloud fleecy  
as swiftly gone.  
I should know  
long before the winter fell  
unretractable  
into the overcoat's  
parochial shell  
that spring meant  
something ephemeral  
as this air-fancier's wit  
sketching in the sky  
of your epithet.

The slight touch  
and the words turn  
(the spelling of swift eyes)  
higher he lifts  
as lightly signifies  
the cloud's wind over  
demise of lover.

This sort of verse has to walk a pretty thin line. At the slightest touch of an ulterior motive, or of anything pretentious, it turns sour. The "immaculate arcs" have got to stay immaculate. Well enough has really got to be left alone. In such successful poems as "The Skywriter," "To . . ." "Standing" (a particularly delightful *tour de force*), "The Second Hand" and "Introspective Lovers," she does leave it alone. Among the rest, some move from the delightful to the dull and back again with sickening speed ("Earth Descending" and "Patience"), while a good number are simply very bad, mainly from unnecessarily loading the circuit with smart images or philosophic profundities ("The Campfire," "The Color of the Light," "Elegy on the Death of Dylan Thomas," "The Construct of Years," and "Pain"). Perhaps there is nothing strange about the high proportion of bad poems in Miss Webb's section. You have to be lucky to write her best poems. Success is unpredictable and failure hardly surprising. When she writes a good poem it is probably as great a surprise to her as it is to me.

Among the recent Ryerson chapbooks is Elizabeth Brewster's *Lillooet*,<sup>3</sup> a sort of small-scale New Brunswick version of Crabbe's *The Borough*, written in casual iambic couplets, and painting a series of portraits of the village politician, clergyman, prostitute, blue-stocking, etc., with sympathy and gentle humor. The poem does not fulfil much of the promise of Miss Brewster's earlier volume *East Coast*, although I found it readable and even successful on a relatively unenterprising level. The prologue, in particular, is good fun. But I prefer her portraits when they are unrhymed and I would very much like to see a few more lyrics to compete with "Granite's not Firm Enough" and "Peace" in the earlier volume.

As for Anthony Frisch, whose *Poems*<sup>4</sup> came out early last year, it is premature to generalize much about a poet so obviously on the move. Maybe it always will be. He continues to write ahead at a great rate (see the December 1954 issue of the *Forum*) and, uneven as much of it may be, his is an unmistakable talent. His special distinction is that (however he may actually make his money) he is basically a professional poet, as no other poet included in this review is. This does not necessarily make him better or more serious (who could be more serious than the gifted artistic amateur in our society?), but it makes him less faddish, less likely to be dazzled by a few sparkling facets of poetry; in a word, more catholic. He includes rather than excludes. "A narrow taste is always indiscriminate," says Auden in one of his best epigrams. He is thinking of critics, but, at this stage in our development, it might be a salutary motto for Canadian poets.

MILTON WILSON.

## Books Reviewed

THIS MOST FAMOUS STREAM: Arthur R. M. Lower;  
The Ryerson Press; pp. 193; \$3.50.

This latest book from the pen of one of Canada's most distinguished historians is both timely and relevant, and those who know Professor Lower through his work will not be surprised that it emerges as "an essay in faith" or that he dedicates it to the Canadian Civil Liberties Associations. "This most famous stream" is the liberal democratic way of life and simply because of the present challenges to it—"the collectivism of Communism" or the "collectivism of Catholicism"—Dr Lower has written a ringing statement of the fundamentals of liberalism which constitute the strength and the genius of western society, especially English-speaking democratic society.

Like an aerial cartographer, he has, in brief chapters, charted from their sources the great tributaries which have poured into this mighty stream of liberalism—the Protestant Christian ethic ("It was not to be the privilege of the Roman Catholic Church to show the modern world the way to liberty"), the development of representative institutions in England, the individual guarantees of the common law, the contributions of the Reformation and particularly Calvinism, and the special gift of the seventeenth century, the doctrine of limited or constitutional monarchy. Crossing the Atlantic to the colonies, he finds the genius of the people essentially the same, the genius of self-government that "lies in several centuries' experience of public institutions based ultimately on an equilibrium of social forces, arrived at through trials of strength ending in compromises." Building on this heritage, and assisted by the ever-present frontier ("space . . . a bulwark of freedom"), North Americans added the institutions of federalism and democracy. The first of these enabled the second to be extended to nations of continental

<sup>3</sup>LILLOOET: Elizabeth Brewster; Ryerson; pp. 28; \$1.00.

<sup>4</sup>POEMS: Anthony Frisch; Ryerson; pp. 22; \$1.00.

proportions and may, he suggests, provide the only viable solution to the problems of international relations. The uniquely Canadian experience he interprets as exhibiting in its brief history nearly every phase of the Anglo-Saxon quest for freedom—"the patterns of the present state . . . had to be cut anew out of colonial cloth."

But the Canadian contribution is more significant, he says, for it saved the British Empire of the nineteenth century and made the Commonwealth of the twentieth, and by its successful compromise of the most difficult questions of religion and race demonstrates anew the genius of self-government in the liberal tradition.

Though there is evident throughout this book the veneration of an able historian for a legacy of institutions he considers rich, there is no suggestion that we stand still; rather the old freedoms are fundamental freedoms which enable man to gain others. "Liberalism, the dynamic of a free society, approximates the search for a just society." And, while the search for the just society inevitably means some degree of collectivism ("the just society is certainly not built solely upon free enterprise"), self-governing peoples need have no fear of having collectivism imposed upon them, even though they are likely to insist on a considerable measure of self-imposed collectivism.

This is a small book, but its pages are packed with culled wisdom, its style is lively, its generalizations provocative, and its theme not only an exalted one but one of which we cannot be too often reminded.

Malcolm Taylor.

**BROTHER MAN:** Roger Mais; Clarke Irwin (Jonathan Cape); p. 191; \$2.50.

This is Roger Mais' second novel of the life of the Jamaican poor. Less violent in tone than *The Hills Were Joyful Together*, which appeared about two years ago, it is technically more controlled. It is the story of a saintly cobbler, a prophet first loved, then persecuted by the naive populace around him. Interest in the fate of saviors seems to be lively among radical thinkers, and one would do well to compare the retelling of the passion of Jesus Christ in Faulkner's *A Fable* with the less complex passion and "resurrection" of Brother Man. This gentle savior is beaten by the mob and left for dead, and on the third day he rouses up to watch a new dawn. Such a theme could easily be mishandled, but Mais does not exaggerate the parallel.

Mais is exploring very deeply the religious impulses of the Jamaican Negro. As with the American Negro, the religious consciousness of the Jamaican finds natural expression in Old Testament language and imagery. But this religion is not Puritan—that it could scarcely be in a community where sexual intercourse is the most common means of communication between otherwise barely articulate human beings. It is, rather, the stress and strain of the prophets of Israel, the intensity of Amos and Isaiah, which attracts the Negro. In this book the prophetic is tempered by the quiet certainty of the Wisdom literature. One part of the parallel is left, perhaps deliberately, vague: is the sacrifice of Brother Man to do for his people something comparable to what Christ's did for mankind? Is it to sanctify pain or to sanctify man's relations with God?

I have the impression that this book is better written than Mais' first novel, and if there is less brutality and lust here, there is also more joy and religious passion. I wish there were more integration of his choric effects with the rest of the work than is attained in the occasional sketchy "Chorus of People in the Lane." With slight reservations I can speak of this novel as both gripping and intensely meaningful.

Graham Cotter.

#### POLITICS AND OPINION IN THE 19TH CENTURY:

John Bowle; Clarke, Irwin; pp. 512; \$5.00.

This book is intended as a sequel to the author's *Western Political Thought*, which was a remarkably broad although uneven survey of political conceptions from the Code of Hammurabi to Rousseau and Burke. But in obvious ways it differs from its predecessor. It devotes more than 500 pages to the political thought of one century (at certain points Mr. Bowle's discussion spills over into the twentieth), and as a consequence there is a more detailed assessment of individual thinkers. Histories of political thought are difficult undertakings, for too easily they slip into the dry cataloging of unrelated ideas. Speculation about the state has always a historical context, and to distill it without appropriate attention to that context is a poor way of furthering political understanding. Mr. Bowle does not fall into this error. He sets out to relate nineteenth century thinkers to the circumstances and challenges of their age and also to one another, and on the whole he is successful. Moreover he has another specific purpose; namely, to bring out and underline the ideas that make for human survival and progress, and he does not leave us in the dark as to what these are. We can approve of all this, although we may demur at some of the author's judgments. We may question, for example, whether it is satisfactory to classify nineteenth century thought simply into that of the romantic age and that of the Darwinian age. Such neat categories are likely to be inadequate where not misleading. Significant thinkers will be found moving back and forth across what is often an irrelevant boundary. However, if we cannot always agree with Mr. Bowle's judgments, we commend his method and skill. He has produced a book that is lively in style, packed with engaging quotations, and provocative in thought. It will assume a place among the more successful surveys of its theme.

A.B.

#### SECURITY AND THE MIDDLE EAST: THE PROBLEM AND ITS SOLUTION: Proposals Submitted to the President of the United States; Ballantine Books (N.Y.); pp. 169; 35c (U.S.A.)

This book, originally submitted to the President of the United States in April, 1954, by twenty well known Americans (most of them clergymen), aims to promote a vast plan for the economic development of the Middle East, under United Nations auspices but mainly with United States money, "for the benefit of the people" of that area. Highly critical of the Arab governments and upper classes, the petitioners offer two conditions the Arabs must meet as the price of U.S. support for the program: "settlement of the Palestine war and agreement to the resettlement of Arab refugees in Arab countries."

In support of its argument that the Arab countries are militarily too weak, its leaders too corrupt, its people too impoverished to be relied upon for support of the Western democracies, the authors paint a fact-studded picture of unrelieved misery, backwardness and contempt for human life. Although much of what they say is true, they have written a highly selective brief against the Arab countries and in favor of Israel.

Irrespective of one's view on Arab-Israel problems, this book is bound to seem curious to the reader seeking a basis for a reasoned Western policy in the Middle East. For many of their facts and interpretations the authors rely upon writers fundamentally friendly to the Arab countries and hostile to Israel. The authors use such writers' critical comments about Arabs but ignore these experts when they are favorable to the Arabs and critical of Israel and Zionism. While they describe the Arab governors as corrupt, back-

ward, and unconcerned with the welfare of their people, the authors of *Security and the Middle East* nevertheless propose a plan that calls for their co-operation. If Arab leaders are really as they are described in this book, one wonders why the authors think they will agree to a proposal that avowedly would reduce their influence, and why the authors are willing to consider at all any scheme that depends for its success upon these leaders' co-operation. Indeed, the authors warn: "That the Arab governments will resist the program proposed . . . , may be assumed." But they unconvincedly insist that these governments cannot indefinitely sustain their resistance "in face of firmness." Everything they write in this book tends to support the notion that the Arab governments can very well indefinitely resist such proposals.

Ultimately, then, the authors beg the questions their approach to U.S. foreign policy implicitly raises. Can U.S. foreign policy peacefully produce *fundamental* socio-economic changes in a region if its governments resist? If the governments resist, can U.S. foreign policy go "over the heads" of the leaders directly to the "masses"? Nothing less basic than such broad issues are involved in this tract, quite apart from the matter of the fairness of the picture they present of the Arab countries. *Morroe Berger.*

**FRENCH POLICY TOWARDS GERMANY SINCE THE WAR:** Robert Schuman; Oxford (Stevenson Memorial Lecture, No. 4); pp. 24; 40c.

This concise, sincere and lucid statement of policy, made at the Royal Institute of International Affairs on October 29, 1953, is an important document—most interesting in retrospect. The lecture was Schuman's noble though unconscious valediction—a faithful account of his German and European policy during his four years of stewardship at the Quai d'Orsay.

France and Germany, he believed, "both have the same idea of doing something new and without precedent . . . Our aim is to put an end to the fragmentation of Europe . . . We want to create a living community from which neither we nor our neighbors can arbitrarily withdraw." In short, *integration*.

Happy in the initial success of the Coal and Steel Community, Schuman hoped still in E.D.C. Nevertheless, in closing, he acknowledged that the main obstacle in the way of the necessary overall "European Political Community" was the constitutional structure of the French Union; the Constitution itself might first have to be revised. Indeed, as this bold but open-minded pioneer has admitted elsewhere, in logic and in accord with the normal historical process, the supreme *political* authority would have to precede, not follow, the creation of a *defence* community.

*S. Mack Eastman.*

**AN AMERICAN IN INDIA:** Saunders Reëding; McClelland and Stewart; pp. 277; \$4.00.

Among the most crucial facets of contemporary world politics is the attempt to wean India away from its declared policy of non-involvement in the Cold War and its effort to create an "area of peace" in South-East Asia and the Far East. In this struggle for India's affections all of the weapons in the arsenal of the modern super-state are being employed, including technical assistance, economic loans and grants-in-aid, military pressure, and propaganda.

One of the boldest moves by the U.S. State Department in this campaign was the selection of a distinguished Negro scholar to interpret the American way of life to the people of Nehru's India. That the results of Prof. Redding's efforts were disappointing is clearly evident in this sensitive and thought-provoking account of his whirl-wind lecture tour in

the sub-continent. Nevertheless, the author has succeeded admirably in enlightening his readers on the ingredients of anti-Americanism in the thinking of the Indian intelligentsia.

In his own words, there are "three types of Indian politico-intellectual orientation . . . an Indian nationalism more absolute, intense and defensive than anything I'd imagined . . . a color-culture consciousness embracing the whole East . . . (and) an incredibly complex, knotted coil of attitudes toward America." (p.212). Everywhere he went Prof. Redding encountered a profound suspicion of U.S. motives in both domestic and foreign policy, and a persistent, biting criticism of America's attitude to its Negro minority and colored peoples generally. The Indian intelligentsia, he records, believe that the United States is imperialistic and that its foreign policy has strong racial overtones; moreover, they identify democracy with capitalism, equating both with cynicism, delay and exploitation.

Professor Redding tried to fathom "the village mind" but failed completely to create a bridge between the "naturalist" West and the peasant mentality of the East. In his understandable frustration he pondered the traditional American attitude and was forthright in his criticism: "we were not sensitive enough to the very high sensitivity of the Indian people", and "we are backing the weaker horse (Pakistan?) in the race against communism . . ." (pp. 232, 235). He correctly points to the "great moral authority" of communist ideas among Indian intellectuals who constantly asserted their intention of combining what they considered beneficial in both systems. His palliative is to "bombard the professionals with the truth" and to increase the effectiveness of the American Information Service.

The sub-title is indeed a misnomer for little light is shed on "the Indian dilemma and the nature of her conflicts." On the contrary, the reader is struck by the dilemma of the author as revealed by the poignant description of the impact of his first contact with an Indian beggar in Bombay.

In an illuminating account of an interview with the U.S. Ambassador at the time, Prof. Redding quotes Mr. Bowles to the effect that the aim of American policy is to maintain India's neutrality. Whether or not this was Mr. Bowles' view (a former member of the embassy has recently taken sharp issue with this interpretation) American spokesmen and policies convey the strong impression that their objective is to secure India's open alignment with the West.

*Michael Brecher*

**TOLSTOY: A LIFE OF MY FATHER:** Alexandra Tolstoy; Musson; pp. 543; \$6.00.

One has come to expect no smallest scrap of previously unknown fact in another biography of Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy and I found none in this book. Indeed, certain incidents of tremendous importance go unmentioned. For example, not a word is said of the now accepted opinion that Tolstoy had an illegitimate son. Such delicacy seems unnecessary in a study of the ever-confessing Tolstoy.

Nevertheless, Alexandra Tolstoy's book is not only a complete, vivid, understanding picture of her illustrious sire, but something in the way of a supplement to the many good biographies already written. Even Aylmer Maude's exhaustive and excellent studies lack some of the intimate filling-in that seems the only unique value of the daughter's book. Even to Tolstoy specialists it will be delightful entertainment to read, for instance, Alexandra's more leisurely references to the gypsies, to the Tula landscape, and to certain phases of family life at "Yasnaya Polyana."

As a narrative, the book is quite satisfactory. No one in the family was closer to this gigantic figure than was her father. No one but the two principal characters themselves was more intimately involved in the dramatic struggle

between the respective philosophies of the Count and Countess. Only to tell this story, without appraising the characters, must often have seemed a superhuman task. And Alexandra Tolstoy has told it well, in a single volume that everyone, even the specialist, can be grateful for.

And her judgments, what of them? I, personally, am too greatly interested in a certain one of them to trouble about the others. And my own conviction here is so ardent, the injustice done Sofya Andreyevna by all of Tolstoy's biographers, and now by her own daughter, seems to me so obvious, that I cannot bring myself to forgive the latter.

In all literary history, I know of no other person so unjustly appraised as was the Countess Tolstoy. This was the almost inevitable result of the very greatness of her husband. Because of the heroic effort of her husband to be a saint, her own solid, more realistic virtue and excellence were invisible in the shadow of his greatness. Yet anyone who takes the trouble may find, in her diaries and Tolstoy's, parallel passages that clearly indicate that her simple goodness, as opposed to his theoretical saintliness, often reveals him as being petty and her great. If anyone doubt this, let him read the diaries of the two in *The Final Struggle: Being Countess Tolstoy's Diary for 1910, with Extracts from Leo Tolstoy's Diary of the Same Period* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1936).

When Alexandra Lvovna calls her father "Tolstoy," the reader of course feels that this is no affectation or forced objectivity. When she speaks of "Sophia Andreyevna," however, one senses that the daughter's feelings for her mother have changed little since the time when Alexandra is said to have spat upon her. In those troublous days, it was easier to forgive in the then younger daughter her excessive zeal for her unhappy father, just as he himself forgave her, except on one dramatic occasion which she relates near the end of her book. One of Tolstoy's most inflexible traits was his gratitude to those who followed most faithfully his inflexible moral code. In all my reading, I have come across no other instance of his impatience with Alexandra, who must sometimes have seemed to him almost as much of a moral gadfly as he now seems to the entire literate world.

Now that Alexandra Lvovna too is an old woman, this reviewer at least finds it hard to forgive in her a complete failure to show any compassion for the infinite sufferings of her mother.

Alexandra Tolstoy spent too many years in "the Remington Room," copying the later manuscripts of the author of *War and Peace* not to have learned how to write well. This she does. As a narrator of his life, she seems extremely able. As an appraiser of his ideas, she shows herself poorly equipped by the very fact of her apparently continued inability to judge her mother with compassionate understanding.

Theodore Ellery Merrit.

THE SELECTED POEMS OF BLISS CARMAN: edited and with an introduction by Lorne Pierce; McClelland and Stewart; pp. 119; 3.00.

TOM THOMSON AND OTHER POEMS: Arthur S. Bourinot; Ryerson; pp. 10; \$1.00.

Bliss Carman, still, probably, Canada's best-known poet, died over twenty-five years ago. More than twenty years ago another poet, L. A. Mackay, prophesied in this magazine that someone would someday make "the right, judicious selection" of Carman's work and that he would be rediscovered in his proper place, "one of the most agreeable of the American minor poets."

The prophecy would seem to be fulfilled at last by Lorne Pierce, Carman's friend and executor and editor-in-chief of the Ryerson Press, the time-lag in fulfillment, as Dr. Pierce indicates in his introduction, having been due to a tangle

of copyright enmeshing Carman's work (it was split among several U.S. and Canadian Publishers) which took over a quarter of a century to unravel.

The editor of any collection or selection, like the anthologist, is bound to leave out or abridge some reader's favorite poem, include another reader's anathema, but Dr. Pierce has made an excellent if not always the expected choice for the general public. "Low Tide on Grand Pre" is included, of course; "The Eavesdropper" and "Spring Song" ("Make me over, mother April—"); "Lord of My Heart's Elation" and "In the House of Idledaily" are omitted.

To many readers the introduction will be as interesting as the collection itself. Dr. Pierce gives a very fair intimation of Carman's strengths and weaknesses both as poet and man—in fact, one wishes the preface were longer, by no means always the case. Commenting on the poet's relationship with Mary Perry King, the editor turns prophet in his turn, "Some day the full story of his friendship will be told." One hopes it will not take another twenty-five years for someone to write the honest biography that will show Carman, not on the pedestal where mistaken admirers have tried to hoist him, but as the warm, colorful and interesting human being who was, to quote Dr. Pierce again, "every inch a poet" even when his writing fell far short of the moving lyricism of which he was capable.

Arthur Bourinot seems to be developing as a rival for Carman for number of books published—a list over an impressive number of years, which includes a Governor-General's award for careful craftsmanship and recognition from such critics as A. J. M. Smith and the late E. K. Brown.

The title work of *Tom Thomson and other poems* exhibits the short line often characteristic of Bourinot's work; the effect created more by the skilful breaking of the lines than by striking use of simile and metaphor. There is a feeling of pictorial correctness in the style for the subject matter (compare Smith's "The Lonely Land"), something of the underlying sense of austerity which permeates even the most colorful of Thomson's canvases.

There are five other poems in the small group. "A Catalogue of Blue" might have been intensified by rearranging for dramatic effect—the "blue frosty mists" seem anticlimactic after the *Last Chalice*, even if they do lead to the atom bomb. "Morning" is a crisp onomatopoeic statement of a daily experience, including ruefully:

"newsboy whistling  
from house to house,  
will he never get past?"

A.M.

LISE: Katherine Roy; McClelland & Stewart; pp. 250; \$2.75.

The fact that the heroine of this tale has a French-Canadian mother and various contacts with Montreal supposedly should arouse any Canadian's nationalistic instinct sufficiently to hold his attention to the end of this slight novel. Lise, the heroine, is first introduced as a pretty, naive young girl brought up in very comfortable sheltered surroundings in pre-war Europe. She meets, is seduced by, and marries, a very dashing and wealthy young Frenchman of good family. For reasons of personal prestige this incredible young man induces his bride to have an abortion on their honeymoon. The remainder of the novel traces the dissolution of the marriage and the problem of divorce against a cosmopolitan background until the beginning of World War II.

The cultural conflicts and intricacies of this continental upper-class milieu, especially as they affect this marriage, could have been a fascinating subject, but they are suggested very superficially rather than explored. The husband's motivations in particular are the result of his social con-

ditioning rather than the mere activities of a selfish monster as is suggested. The secondary characters are completely flat and two-dimensional and all act in conformity with their social position. It is indicated that Lise has potentialities in personality and character but these never develop. They wither away within the security of her vacuous social mold. However, the novel has the restrained charm of a formal water-color sketch, though it will be enjoyed largely by women with the same tenuous appreciation of reality as Lise.

Joan Fox.

**A MUSTER OF ARMS AND OTHER STORIES:** Thomas H. Raddall; McClelland and Stewart; pp. 236; \$3.50.

The clump of seaboots, the scent of pipe-tobacco, and the flash of Tartan are among the ingredients from which Thomas Raddall's Nova Scotian adventure yarns derive their charm. The charm is evident in *A Muster of Arms*: in "The Pass o' Killiecrankie," which tells of an incident in the feud between R.C.A.F. men and Maritime Highlanders, for example, and in "The Mistress of CKU," in which Raddall draws on his experience as a wireless operator, as he has often before, to good effect. Unfortunately, the book begins with a labored and predictable account of the gallantry of the wife of a naval commander who has lost his nerve, and ends with a none-too-skilful rehach of Maritime history, as recorded in a farmwife's collection of firearms. And it included also the tired story of a prostitute with a heart of gold, or rather of a lady with a heart of gold who turns out to be a prostitute. It is when reading such items that one feels impatient with Raddall's modest avowal that he writes yarns for the passing hour, and wishes that he would aspire to tightly strung plots, piercing psychological insights, and biting aptness of diction.

Jean Burnet.

**SWAMP ANGEL:** Ethel Wilson; Macmillan; pp. 215; \$2.50.

Mrs. Wilson is a Vancouver writer whose work grows steadily in importance with every book she writes. It is interesting to note that before her first novel, *Hetty Dorval*, brought her to general attention, she had contributed a few short stories to English magazines and one to *The Canadian Forum*. After *Hetty Dorval*, which had the stiffness of a first novel, came *The Innocent Traveller*, family sketches done with a sure touch of humor and unified by that delightfully frivolous character, "Aunt Topas." In 1952 she published *The Equations of Love*, two novelettes, and if we needed further proof of a first-rate talent the evidence was here. There may be more vital people than "Myrt" and "Mort" and "Mrs. Emblem" in recent Canadian fiction, but we have not met them. The second story, "Tuesday and Wednesday," reached a high point in the handling of character, situation and dialogue and is suffused with the warm tolerance and undeluded humor which underlies Mrs. Wilson's view of the human predicament. It is this spirit which gives value to her characterizations and marks a style which is unmistakably hers.

*Swamp Angel* is the story of a woman's life, as was *Lilly's Story*, but the new book is longer and more ambitious in its scope, in that it does not depend so largely upon a central character but in addition to its heroine "Maggie Vardoe" there are other important people, notably the wonderful "Mrs. Severance." To the creator of Mrs. Severance, we take off our hat. She is of the order of "Gulley Jimson" though not as fully nor as extravagantly conceived. Still, after a long eventful life, she is conscious of the "fearful joy" of living. This is symbolized for her by the "Swamp Angel," a small revolver which she had used in the juggling act which she and her husband had performed in their youth. She is ripe with age and wisdom, a foil to the busy people

in their middle years around whom the plot revolves. She is talking of her brother-in-law: "He was a gentle anarchist. When he was staying with us, the evil of the world had become too much for him and he started one night to throw himself off a cliff. What a night! Then he found that he had forgotten his false teeth so he came back to the house to get them. When he got his teeth in he reconsidered. Later he became very respectable and dropped us."

These stories, including "Swamp Angel," are not profound, they are honest and good-humored and touched with the magic of their setting in our fabulous province on the Pacific coast. Aided by their creator's sure instinct for evocative detail her characters live and breathe real air.

*Swamp Angel*, to the mind of this reviewer, does not sustain the artistry of *Tuesday and Wednesday*, but if Mrs. Wilson can continue to create characters like "Mrs. Severance" and "Lilly" and "Mrs. Emblem," by all means let us have them.

Hilda Kirkwood.

**FRIEDRICH SCHILLER'S DRAMA:** E. L. Stahl; Oxford; pp. 172; \$2.75.

Following the example set in recent years by Garland and Witte, Mr. Stahl endeavours in the present book to correct, by careful and judicious study, not only the excessive homage rendered to Schiller by some earlier critics but the "morning-after" repulsion which succeeded it and resulted in a dearth of English works on Schiller lasting from the early part of the century until five years ago.

Mr. Stahl bases his work on the conviction that "the peculiarity of Schiller's mind consisted in its ambivalence: he achieved the simultaneous operation of reflective and imaginative mental processes." His main concern is not, therefore—though he does not abandon chronology—to discuss the early plays, the theoretical writing and the late plays as relatively differentiated stages in Schiller's work, but to examine plays and theory in effect simultaneously and with the specific purpose of discovering what light they throw upon one another. The examination is particularly successful, I think, in regard to the theory and the late plays. Here Mr. Stahl is able to throw new light, for example, on Schiller's interpretation of Kant—"He had no interest in epistemology as such, but the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*

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taught him to appreciate the potentialities as well as the limitations of human perception . . . He interpreted the exercise of our cognitive forces as being closely allied to the creative process of the artist." And, on the basis of his perception of the disparity between Schiller's idea of tragedy and his choice of Wallenstein for a tragic hero, he deals in a highly convincing manner with the manifold problems of Wallenstein. With the interpretation of the early plays I am less happy. Mr. Stahl notes in his preface that he has made no attempt to discuss all aspects of Schiller's drama, and his method is better adapted, I think, to a just appreciation of the late works than of the early. With this reservation his analysis seems to be coherent and stimulating and an important step toward the rehabilitation of a serious and thoughtful dramatist. *M.J.S.*

**BURL IVES' TALES OF AMERICA:** Nelson, Foster & Scott (World Publishing Co.); pp. 305; \$5.00.

In his latest book Burl Ives has strung together a fascinating miscellany of tales from America's history and folklore. The modern minstrel who is rapidly becoming a legend himself has a sensitive awareness of his country's traditions, and here he weaves both fact and fiction into a richly varied tapestry. There are twenty-eight individual stories, and three sections called "From a Wayfarer's Notebook" which give snippets and clippings from each of the three centuries of America's history. The book is attractively illustrated with black-and-white sketches by Helen Borten, and printed in large generously spaced type.

Many familiar characters are here: Pocahontas, Buffalo Bill Cody, and Daniel Boone, Captain Kidd, Jean Lafitte, and Andrew Jackson, Mike Fink, Big-foot Wallace, and Daniel Emmett, as well as many less well-known but equally colorful personalities. Indian fighters and Forty-Niners, ghosts and pirates, southern gallants and belles, whalers and shantymen, all parade before us, recreating the semblance of times gone by.

It is a highly personalized narrative, for Burl Ives tells us in his preface: "These are living legends for me, and I tell them as I feel and live them." Historians and folklorists may quibble over his interpretations, but the thousands of people who have taken his folk songs to their hearts will read his tales with equal pleasure. *Edith Fowke.*

**SWEET AND SOUR:** John O'Hara: Random House; pp. 162; \$3.50.

This book is a collection of pieces about books and writers and various literary matters which Mr. O'Hara wrote for a Newark newspaper. His comments were "salty," according to his publisher; I'd be inclined to say that they were usually coy, folksy and painfully self-conscious. He has some good hates: J. Donald Adams of the *New York Times*, for example, and that dreariest of all magazines *The Saturday Review*. And sometimes there's a suggestion of a mournful and wistful personality beneath all the bombast. But Mr. O'Hara is a master of the trivial aside and an old hand at beating air. A foolish and depressing book. *R.W.*

**PREPARATION FOR PAINTING:** Lynton Lamb; Oxford; pp. 161; \$3.50.

The discussion of the craft and techniques of drawing and painting in this volume will give its readers a more than adequate frame of reference. The reproductions together with the author's comments illustrate the use of gesso, pen and ink, sketch transference of landscapes and other methods. Mr. Lamb wrote his book specifically for beginners and students. He insists throughout that a practical knowledge of the medium should facilitate rather than hinder creative expression.

Mr. Lamb also expatiates on the purpose of the artist. This is at best a difficult subject and, although the author has indulged freely in quoting from Malraux, Delacroix, Cezanne, and Raymond Chandler (*Murder in the Madhouse*), he has failed to clarify his evaluations to a point where the beginner, student or, as Mr. Lamb so quaintly puts it, the "professional artist" could begin to comprehend this purpose. *Margaret McCrow.*

### Our Contributors

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